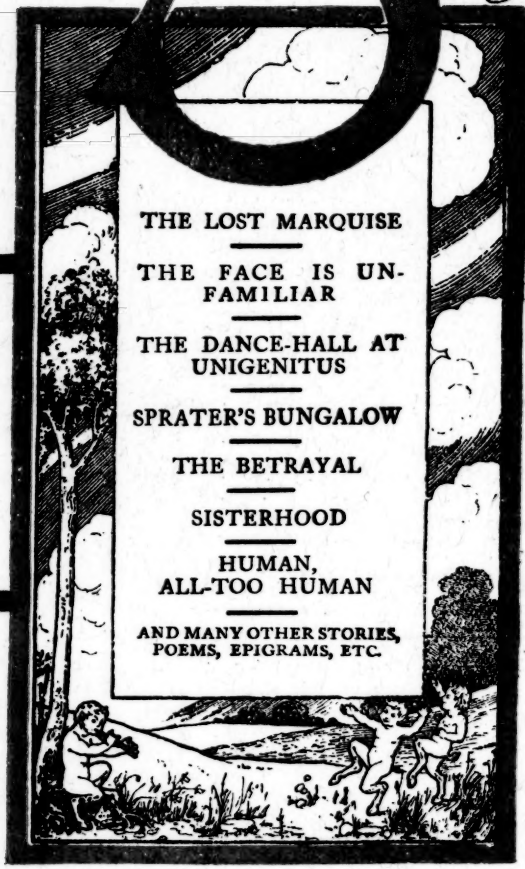
THE SMART SET

A Magazine of Cleverness

To Amuse, Not to Instruct



THE LOST MARQUISE

THE FACE IS UNFAMILIAR

THE DANCE-HALL AT UNIGENITUS

SPRATER'S BUNGALOW

THE BETRAYAL

SISTERHOOD

HUMAN, ALL-TOO HUMAN

AND MANY OTHER STORIES, POEMS, EPIGRAMS, ETC.

MARCH 1920

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A MAGAZINE OF CLEVERNESS

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Editor—J. W. MILNE

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"The Smart Set" Magazine, Dane's Inn House, 265 Strand, W.C. 2
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Good Advice to Dancers by

MLLE. GABY DESLYS

"Dancing is always very, very bad for the feet. So, to dance well, one must first learn to keep all foot troubles away, just as one must learn to breathe right before learning to sing. Such *malheurs* as corns and aches would make dancing painful to perform and not pleasant to see. This is why good dancers cannot afford to have bad feet, and so *they do not have them.* But why is it that so few others know how to take the right care of the feet, when it is so easy to keep them well and beautiful! Ordinary saltrated water quickly softens even the very deepest corns so they come right out, root and all, leaving only a tiny hole that soon closes," says a beautiful French dancer.

The following extract from a recent interesting article explains how anyone can not only obtain perfect foot comfort *immediately*, but also *keep* the feet sound and healthy, exactly as professional dancers do.

"I am telling you a secret of the theatrical profession. You merely ask for about half a pound of Reudel Bath Saltrates, easily obtained at slight cost from any chemist. A small handful dissolved in a foot bath medicates the water like at the famous Continental spas, and it is at once filled with oxygen which you can feel acting on the skin. I find it, Oh! so fragrant, refreshing and—invigorating is the word, is it not? When the feet are tired, aching or calloused and swollen from walking or dancing, a saltrated foot bath quickly relieves these and even more painful foot troubles. The skin becomes *tres lisse*, so clear and beautiful.

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INVITES the patronage of all who desire to retain pleasant memories of the Park meetings—or any other meeting in which they may be interested.

There are some who are prejudiced against the idea of receiving advice about racing—but why? If you know a friend in the City—one who is in intimate touch with the right people—do you not simply yearn to ask him to tell you what he knows? Of course you do, and just as the ordinary speculator or investor needs sound advice to guide him in his operations, so does he (or she) who takes a speculative interest in racing.

And why not have it? If you want advice on law, you go to a man of legal experience to get it; if you want advice on your health, you go to an expert for it, so why not seek the advice of an expert at racing? I have owned many winners, and I get to know the business intended by a good many stables, which knowledge, combined with experience and good judgment, and the fact that I spare no outlay and no trouble which will bring WINNERS, necessarily results in profit, both to myself and to those who patronise me.

Now, the first thing to remember is this—It is of no use backing horses every day just for the sake of having a bet. The only sure way to success is to *wait*, to wait until something really reliable comes along, and that is my part of the business, and I observe it strictly. I cannot and *will not* wire every day.

Another thing is, to unalterably confine your operations to *one horse*, and never more under any circumstances whatever. Then, by following these occasional items of genuine information, strictly one horse, you can absolutely rely on beating your bookmaker, and I want you to accept my help, for I know that I can win money for you regularly.

If you are attending any meeting, or if you are staying at home and desire to take a speculative interest in any race-meetings, you cannot do better than patronise me, for I have the best men on the Turf working for me, I employ men who attend every meeting and travel the training quarters, ever on the search for winners, and I am confident that the profit of the season 1920 will surpass even that of past years. I lay no claim to infallibility, but I DO claim experience and judgment, which MUST be beneficial to my followers.

I supply the information each day that I advise anything to be done, my terms being the odds to two sovereigns each winner. Add £2 to your stake every time, and the profit of that £2 (as paid to you by your bookmaker) is what you pay me for each win, as my fee for the advice. Don't run away with the idea that the information is dear, for it is nothing of the sort. It is not what you pay for WINS that counts against you, but what you pay your bookmaker for losers, and you will win oftener than you will lose if you follow me. Moreover, the information will really cost you very little, if you add my fee to your own stake every time, as the only out-of-pocket cost to you is when the information loses, which is not often.

Intending followers must send four stamped and addressed forms (or their cost), with clear instructions for me to follow, and settle promptly for winners as due. No commissions are executed, but I can wire direct to the Agents of those who cannot personally attend to wires.

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Signed.....

Remember 4 stamped forms (or cost) for me to wire you.

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AMONGST THE PROFITS

By H. DENNIS BRADLEY.

DEAD HEAT

THE large fat man stepped into the five-thousand-guinea Rolls-Royce, and, lighting his five-shilling cigar, turned up the collar of his five-hundred-guinea fur coat, and flung himself back on the sumptuous cushions.

"Drive to the nearest Profiteering Tribunal," commanded the large fat man. "I want something to laugh at till six o'clock, when I can buy some more champagne."

And the great car stole silently away.

"Who is that?" I asked an awestruck policeman.

"That?" he repeated in astonishment, "Do you mean to say you don't know 'im? That's made millions in whisky, during the war, 'e did."

I enquired the nearest way to the Tribunal.

In the front row of the seats allotted to the public, sat several large fat men, with red faces, and fat, red hands. Massive gold chains festooned their massive stomachs, and as they listened to the plaints they chuckled apoplectically until they quivered like huge expressive jellies.

"The Tribunal is of opinion that a gross overcharge has been made," boomed the chairman's voice, and the small trader in the dock became pallid with apprehension. "The sum of 2½d., which represents a conscienceless overcharge, must be refunded to the complainant, whom we congratulate on his courage in bringing this nefarious case before us."

I lost interest and dozed.

* * * *

I woke with a start.

An indescribable change had come over the scene. The dock was now tenanted by large fat men, who clutched the rail nervously with their coarse bejewelled hands.

Again the chairman's voice rang forth, but this time it sounded like the voice of doves.

"You," he pronounced, addressing the first trembling wretch, "have been proved to have made a war profit of many millions, wrung out of your fellow countrymen in their necessity. That you are a distiller and that the Government is sharing profits with you is no defence. You," he turned to the next, "confess to a war profit of many millions wrung out of the housewives of the nation while their men were at war. That you deal in cotton and that the Government shares with you by the Excess Profit Tax is no defence. You——"

But the moans and screams for mercy became so loud that I woke from the dream within a dream.

The gasping chuckles of one of the fat men had awakened me. They had ceased to pay any attention to the Tribunal proceedings, and were discussing their own cleverness.

"Yes," giggled one, "there was a flaw in the contract, so they couldn't stop me going on turning out aeroplanes, and they had to pay for 'em even if they did scrap 'em as soon as I delivered them."

"You can't profiteer in my line," boasted another proudly, "my goods aren't on the list."

"I said to the Government, take it or leave it. That's my price," announced a third. "I knew that they had to have the stuff, naturally I squeezed 'em."

"I've dodged 'em by giving the surplus to the shareholders," confided yet another; "me and my family hold most of the shares," he added, chuckling.

"The Tribunal order a refund of a 1½d.," pronounced the voice of the chairman, "and is, moreover, of opinion that a singularly gross case of profiteering has been established. The thanks of the community are due to the heroic complainant."

Whereupon the wretched little draper, found guilty of a conscienceless attempt to squeeze a little more out of a reel of cotton to pay for his increased cost of living, swooned.

* * * *

How long are we going to submit to these fantastic interferences with liberty? The prices charged by this House for Lounge Suits vary from ten to sixteen guineas. A charge of profiteering would be welcomed, and then the Profiteering Tribunal may be promised the time of their lives.

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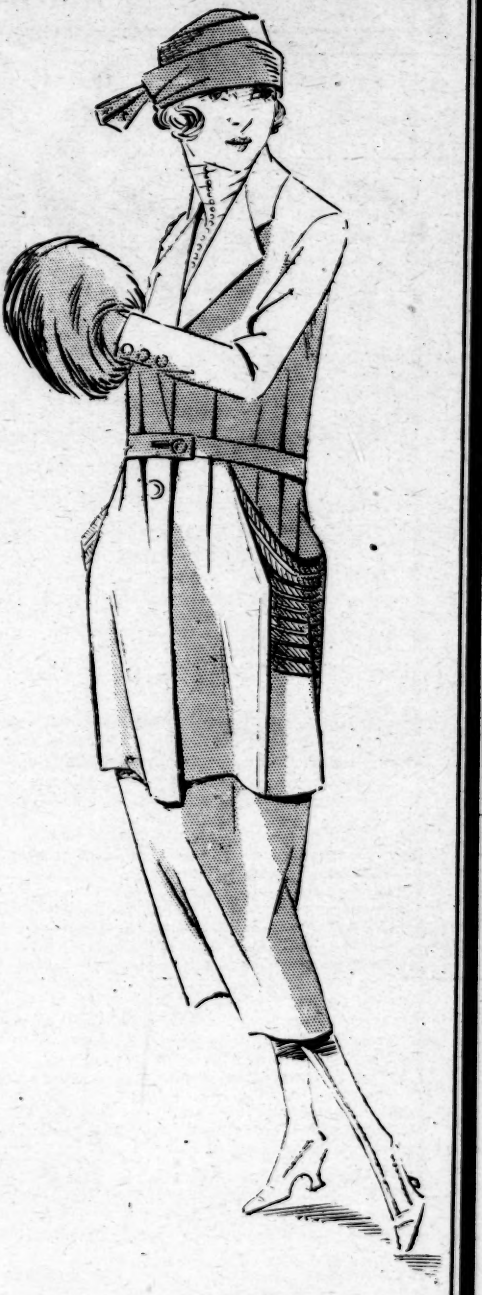

We have designed for the coming Spring a number of attractive and practical TAILOR SUITS, similar in character to the illustration. These suits are made in navy, black, and soft coloured suitings of reliable quality, and a new feature is introduced by the short, tailor-made coats being attractively finished with silk braid to tone.

TAILOR SUIT in fine quality corded suiting, coat cut on plain tailor-made lines, with novelty pockets attractively finished with silk braid to tone. Plain well-cut skirt, with pockets to correspond. In navy, black, and a good range of colours.

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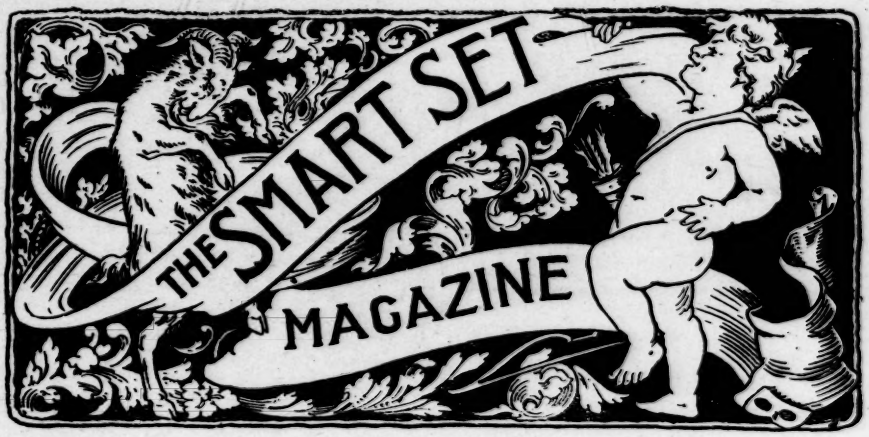

FROM THE JOURNAL OF MME. LEANDRE

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1920
CAMBRIDGE

By Helen Woljeska

I

THE love of men and women is like an intoxicating drink . . . as varied in quality and effect. Some loves are like raw whisky, crude and brutalizing—and some like a cleverly mixed cocktail, stimulating, but episodic. Some have the debonnair vim of foaming beer—some the mild mellowness of old port—or the gracious brilliance of Rhine wine—the rich velvety depth of noble Burgundy—the fire and thrill of passionate Tokay. And there are loves like Champagne, all effervescence and frivolity. But others . . . like strangely dangerous liqueurs . . . enchant with a sinister spell that lasts unto death. . . .

II

In love . . . women seek an appreciative audience for their subtle moods and mysterious tendernesses, for their risqué vaudeville acts and great tragic scenes . . . and men seek a private performer, to while away dull hours with glittering allurement, to make them forget the drabness of every-day with the lavish display of grace and passion, to resurrect illusions with the brilliant fireworks of make-believe.

CLIMAX

By Ralph B. Cooney

HE came slowly to the centre of the stage, the utmost dignity and *savoir faire* showing in every step. For a moment he paused, and looked about him sadly; then, advancing in the same distinctive manner, brushed back his handsome pompadour with an easy and graceful air and, with sudden determination showing in his face, halted abruptly and pulled off his white gloves.

The president of the local branch of the scene-shifters' union was ready for work.

THE CURE

By Louis Untermeyer

"HEAL me, beloved, and have me
Strong at your side.
I am weak, I am cold and hungry
For all that you have denied.
I shall die with loving a promise—
Heal me!" he cried.

She put her hands on his forehead;
She touched his lips and sighed.
With a warm and lavish abandon,
She flung off her pride.
She healed him of his sickness,
And it was she that died.

WHEN a man kisses his wife it arouses her suspicions. When a woman kisses her husband it arouses everybody's suspicions.

HUMAN, ALL-TOO HUMAN

By L. M. Hussey

CHAPTER I

THE austerity of Mr. Richard Turner always relaxed a little after luncheon. To a certain degree, then, he felt more hope for the world. This was the most favourable moment to accost him for contributions to worthy causes.

If you could demonstrate to him, as the processes of his digestion were just beginning, that your society was militant enough, went about its moral purpose with enough determination and relentlessness—if you could show him a list of sinners repenting their carnalities in jail through your efforts, then he would be most inclined to write you a cheque. And to-day was no exception.

He emerged from the restaurant smiling a trifle. The sparity of his figure seemed a little less pronounced, fuller, a little richer than usual. He had just finished a platter of roast beef and vegetables, preceded by half a dozen large clams. Finally, he had given it all an agreeable savour with a good-sized piece of apple-pie. These excellent dishes were washed down with clear, filtered water—the liquid, minus its interloping germs, designed for a beverage by the good Lord God. His faint smile might have persisted for half an hour or more, had he not experienced that regrettable meeting with his son.

The young man and his astonishing companion approached him unseeing, talking freely to each other, walking along the sidewalk in a vicious oblivion to all the passers by.

Turner perceived them some seconds before he recognized his son; his first glance was aimed at the woman.

He appreciated her type instantly. Her hat was large and decorated with horticultural flamboyance. Although the day was warm she wore a useless white fur about her neck. Her dress was cut low in front, revealing her white skin shamelessly. Anyone could see the dark pigment around her eyes, the paint on her lips, the rouge on her cheeks, the powder on her face.

She walked close to the young man, entwining her arm with his own; her hips swayed slightly with each small stride, making a repeated, momentary contact with the trousered legs of her companion. Twenty yards away, over the clatter of the street, Mr. Turner could hear her giggles and her laugh.

And then he recognized his son!

The smile went from his lips like a vanishing phantom. They became compressed; they turned down at the corners; his small eyes narrowed and glared. The two were coming close and he tried to catch the boy's eye. But the enraptured youth never looked up, never turned his face from that of his odious companion. He was murmuring to her in a low voice, with his head inclined and his lips under the brim of her hat.

He passed his father as obliviously as he passed all those strangers on the street, witnesses of his shame.

Turner wheeled and looked back. The two went on as before, slowly, close together, their faces near, their attitude one of the utmost intimacy. He watched them until they reached the corner and turned out of his sight.

Now, his emotions were a complex of astonishment and anger. This behaviour of his son was more unexpected than a to-morrow's millennium. The

docility, the acquiescence, and the professions of the boy had removed all the suspicions natural to a man of his mind. He had regarded his child as a model of clean youth, and here, in a single blow, in a single damning revelation, was the abhorrent truth!

His pride in his own penetration, in his unending advocacy of parental watchfulness, was bitterly lacerated; he had been duped as shamelessly and as easily as all the blind parents of his acquaintance. And with the worst of all failings!

It was appalling that his son had ever spoken with a woman of such obvious character, that he was seen publicly upon the street with her, that he talked to her with such intimacy, with those tender attitudes. His heart became cold and his inward fury blanched further the normal pallor of his face.

He determined to see his wife at once; she must know immediately. There was no returning to his office that afternoon.

He began to walk rapidly, clenching his fists slightly at his sides.

In his hurt pride he thought of all the leniencies, all the ease, he had permitted his son. The boy attended the University under every condition of student luxury. He was permitted to live in the dormitories, he was plentifully supplied with money, it was possible for him to hold membership in an expensive fraternity.

Turner contrasted the difficulties, the stringencies, even the privations, of his own youth. This recollection brought, as usual, the comparison with his present condition, and the mental paralleling of the two somewhat eased his mind.

He had made money; he had gone far—and he had a profound conviction of the essential reason. From the beginning he had throttled all those impulses that destroy character and weaken the austere virtues that assure success. If his son had not himself the strength for this inward control, then Turner would, by watching and by prohibitions, bring him the strength. His face was determined and the light of an unopposable purpose shone in his small eyes.

When he reached his house he found that his wife, as he had anticipated, was at home. His coat and hat were taken from him in the hall and he hurried on up the stairs. His wife was in their bedroom, with her maid, taking some sort of an inventory of dresses.

She was surprised at his entrance. Her pallid blue eyes widened a little at the sight of him.

"Well, Richard!" she exclaimed. "Why are you home so soon?"

"Alice, there is something I must talk to you about," he said.

The maid retired. With an expression of alarm his wife sat down on the little chair before her dressing table, waiting for him to speak. Her small face was acutely concerned; she passed her hands nervously against the sides of her tightly combed hair.

"Tell me!" she said. "What is it?"

"I saw John to-day, just as I was coming out from lunch," began Turner.

"Oh, what is it!" she cried. "Nothing has happened to him!"

"No physical hurt," said Turner, in a voice that expressed a deep regret. "Worse than that. He was walking along the street with a woman of the sort that neither you nor I would receive in our home. I don't know anything about the woman; I don't know who she is—but I recognized her kind easily enough. A vulgar, loud-mouthed, powdered and painted hussy! And John was leaning over close enough to kiss her! This is the first idea I've had that our boy was in any such company."

As he concluded, his wife turned her eyes from side to side in a futile searching, as if, confronted with some impending danger, she could see, somewhere in that room, a lane of escape.

"What are you going to do?" she murmured.

He knit his brows and glared at the floor, and for a short time he was

silent. Behind his back he clenched his hands into a single, taut fist.

Finally he spoke.

"I am going to put a stop to this business right away," he said. "I want you to telephone to John and have him come home immediately. Tell him I want to see him. Tell him I don't care what classes he misses this afternoon. And this is the last of that dormitory nonsense. He is going to live in this house where we can have our eyes on him at all times!"

He elaborated, walking up and down the room, dictating the terms he intended to impose like a victorious field-marshal.

His wife, silent as an ineffectual shadow, sat in her little chair and the small wrinkles in her forehead deepened, the small wrinkles around her eyes intensified, the drooping curve of her mouth turned dolorously downward. Her hands lay in her lap and she twisted the fingers together.

She kept her face upon her husband, her gaze following his nervous pacing with an indomitable patience.

Finally he stopped, pausing in his oration, and turned his eyes upon her.

"You'd better get him on the 'phone now," he remarked finally. "Tell him I'm waiting for him in my study and I want him immediately!"

He turned and walked rapidly out of the room, passing through the hall and entering another small room near the end of the corridor. This was the sanctum of his lucubrations; he sat down heavily in an armchair, before an open, roll-top desk.

Sitting there, half in the shadow of the room's walls, half illumined by the window at his side, he looked remarkably implacable and austere, breathing, it almost seemed, by the sole, animating virtue of his harsh beliefs, his unwavering prejudices—and his fears.

Presently his son, suspecting his purpose, found him there, and for more than an hour Turner showered the boy with the torrential accumulation of his denunciation, emitting hard words like a stream of pointed darts.

The boy said nothing. He saw his liberties curtailed; he could not protest. If he failed to comprehend the causes of his father's moral certitudes, he had at least understood their unalterable character. He even made no effort at justification, and when confession was demanded, he told everything.

She was a chorus girl in a musical *revue*. He had met her one evening at the stage door with two or three companions. He said that this was her last week in the city—her company was going on tour for several months. When questioned specifically, he gave the address of the house where she had been a guest.

He was finally dismissed from his father's presence, under the ire of a few concluding phrases in the manner of a corollary to his humiliation.

CHAPTER II

TURNER remained in his room for some time, thinking over the situation. Somehow he doubted part of his son's statement. All his suspicions were active; now he trusted nothing. Specifically, he did not believe that the girl was leaving the city. His imagination conceived continued meetings between her and the boy, clandestinely carried out.

And then, like an inspiration, there came to him the plan to go to the address given him, face the girl herself, and tell her—tell her anything that the inspired indignation of the moment put on his lips.

He would appear before her like a personified judgment, he would shame her, he would make her acutely sensible to the weight of his righteous anger. The thoughts of this inspired rôle gave to him a dull but profound thrill.

And then, as a subtle perversity, there entered into his exalted moment the shadow of a doubt, a strange shrinking, an unwelcome fear.

Trying to vision the actual presenting of himself to the girl, he experienced an unexpected reluctance, as if

to see her would be to look upon a serpent-headed Medusa, pregnant with evil consequences.

For a moment he lost the surety of himself, the confidence in his own unswerving purpose. He, the man of unremitting virtue, seemed capable of weakness also, susceptible to a vague and diabolic allure. Before his eyes the picture of the woman presented itself. He saw her reddened lips, more red than nature, lurid he thought, damnably seductive — and he understood how a man might kiss them!

He stood up suddenly.

He clenched his hands into two hard fists. A moisture beaded his brow as if a sultry air had entered into the room, heating his blood unnaturally. He raised his eyes, looking up at the ceiling, trying to penetrate beyond the limits of paper and plaster to the strength-giving presence of that cold Power he imagined somewhere above him. And gazing with his upturned face he became more firm; the agonizing weakness departed from him; he left the room with his purpose once more secure.

Nevertheless, he did not confide anything of his intent to his wife. She was very eager to hear everything that had happened in the interview, and he faithfully related the words that had passed between him and the boy.

But he reserved his determination as a secret. He explained this reservation on the grounds that it was a delicacy, a sordid necessity unfit for the concern of this woman who shared his life. He had already decided to visit the girl the following morning.

When he awakened the next day, out of the confusion and forgetfulness of sleep, the plan came into his mind immediately. He got up and made his toilet as usual, shaved, brushed his dark coat before putting it on, straightened his small bow tie with grimaces before a mirror. He carefully combed back his sparse hair and then stood waiting a few minutes for his wife to go down with him to breakfast. He kissed her good-bye in the hall and walking out of the house, got into his car that was waiting for him outside.

As was his custom, he drove into the city himself, using a somewhat shabby runabout. It seemed early and he went at first to his office, where he spent an hour over the mail. This place, with its clatter of typewriters and its atmosphere of business, always brought a certain warmth to his heart. It was all his *own* creation! It was his monument of sacrifice, of honesty, of unflinching rectitude. It was, he was fully convinced, a reward. In seconds of doubt, in single instants of weakness, it comforted him for certain other things—unmentionable things—that he had renounced and foregone.

His business was, he persuaded himself, a humanitarian and even an inspired enterprize. Through his offices, coming from his two large factories, there went out to a dyspeptic world thousands of boxes of glistening, ivory-white, symmetrical false teeth, fabricated by a cheaper process than that of any other manufacturer. Turner knew, with a great pride, that he made and sold more false teeth than all the other concerns combined; the thought came to him this morning with its never-failing freshness, and made the hour agreeable to his spirit. He was almost smiling when he put on his coat to go out.

But this ghost of a smile vanished as he emerged to the street. The full memory of his immediate enterprise returned sharply to his recollection. He frowned; he contracted his thin lips; his narrowed eyelids expressed his unshakable determination. A stern exultation stirred him as with a concealed inner fire.

He got into his car and as he drove away there was within him a fervour not unlike that of an ancient crusader, ready to do battle for a sacred mystery. He looked from side to side, at the crowds in the street, and every man and woman seemed charged with secret sins.

The address was somewhat distant from his office. The neighbourhood, he

found, was excellent. This did not please him; he would have preferred a more sordid atmosphere, for this would have afforded a better background to the lustre of his own virtue.

He turned into the street he sought and running slowly, peered out of the side of the car at the numbers of the houses. They were large structures, not wholly modern, and a little depressing in the stolidity of their brown stone. He caught sight of the number he wanted and drawing close to the curb, stopped the motor.

Summoning his dignity, he mounted the steps of the house and rang the bell. A maid came to the door and he gave her the name of the girl.

She stood aside for him to enter and then, leading the way into the drawing-room, asked him to wait. The door was hung by a pair of plush curtains; he stood just behind these looking about him.

The room and the house surprised him and in a measure gave him a feeling of discomfort. He would have preferred some cheap boarding-house, a setting easier to dominate. As it was, however, the adventuress evidently claimed friendship or some sort of relation with fairly affluent people. The room in which he stood was well furnished, but it had an exotic air of which he did not approve; nevertheless he admitted that the pieces were costly.

His eye, roaming the wall, caught sight of a photographic reproduction of some Greek statuary. At this he was staring malevolently when he heard someone descending the stairs, a woman's step.

He drew back a little; his expression became more stern; his determination straightened his shoulders and deepened the lines in his long face. The curtains were drawn aside and she came into the room.

Her aspect brought him an immediate surprise. This was not the girl he had seen on the street; it was another woman entirely. She was older, matured in figure, not a girl at all.

"You called to see Miss Hollins?" she asked. "I thought I'd come down and explain. Miss Hollins is not here any longer."

Surprised at the appearance of an unexpected and unknown woman, Turner was somewhat taken aback. His confusion was intensified by the appearance and manner of the stranger. She was very self-possessed. She looked straight into his eyes and smiled at him with ingratiating lips. The room was dim; the shades were drawn low; her dark hair, eyes and skin made her mysterious. He felt within him a curious tremor, a faint emotion of fear, an enervation, a weakness.

"You mean she doesn't live here?" he faltered.

"Yes; perhaps you don't know but Miss Hollins' company is going on tour to-morrow. She packed up her things and left this morning. I've really no idea where you can find her—unless you call at the theatre."

He did not know what to say. He knew that the thing to do was to go—and yet he was restrained, restrained by a desire to talk further with the woman in front of him, to look at her eyes that retained a frank gaze on his face—held back, in brief, by motives too obscure for an instant divining.

He stared down at the floor and was awkwardly silent.

"Is there anything I can do for you?" she asked. "My name is Mrs. Goddard—this is my home."

He knew that it was necessary to say something, and so he raised his face falteringly, meeting the smiling frankness of her gaze.

"You—you think I might find her at the theatre?" he asked.

The woman looked at him thoughtfully and then shook her head a little.

"Hardly, Mr.——"

"Turner," he prompted.

"Mr. Turner. As I say, Miss Hollins' company is going on tour to-morrow. She's doubtless made all her arrangements at the theatre and expects to leave town some time this afternoon. Are you one of her friends?"

At this outrageous question Turner

flashed with the swift touch of anger that it aroused, and some of his aplomb returned. His shoulders stiffened and his slouch vanished.

"No!" he cried.

The denial rang out emphatically in that room and was resonated from the walls. The woman leaned forward a trifle, her lips parted, curving to a surprised smile, and she regarded him eagerly. Again her gaze disconcerted him.

His fingers fumbled with the edges of his coat; his eyes dropped to the carpet.

"You see, I—I—" he began.

"Won't you sit down, Mr. Turner?" she asked.

He was glad of the invitation, for in his confusion it seemed impossible to stand quietly and face her. He wondered why he was still in the room, what necessity remained for his presence, yet some astonishing allure kept him there. After he was seated the woman, stepping in from the door, drew up a chair opposite to his and sat down.

"Don't hesitate to tell me anything you care to," she said. "I'm not any especial friend of Miss Hollins. Years ago I knew her mother and when I heard that the girl had gone on the stage and was in town, I invited her to stay with me for a few days. . . ."

She faltered a moment, looking keenly at Turner's embarrassed figure. Her eyes scrutinized him swiftly and then she hazarded her conclusion.

"Perhaps it's not fair for me to make a judgment in such a short time," she said, "but Miss Hollins is probably not the sort of girl people like you and I would care to know."

Her intuitive estimate of the man and his sympathies proved excellent, for now he raised his face, he was more assured, and he spoke with some firmness.

"Exactly," he agreed. "I don't hesitate to give you my confidence, Mrs. Goddard. I only saw the girl once, that was yesterday. She was in the company of my son, and shortly afterward I learned from the boy's confession that they had become intolerably intimate. You can imagine how little I liked that!"

Her face became sympathetic, but she did not wholly abandon her faint smile that seemed now a little mocking.

"Of course!" she murmured.

"I thought my son was different," Turner went on, "but I suppose that was just prejudice. No doubt all these young men lack sense!"

These words by no means conveyed his entire conviction, yet something in the attitude of the woman shaped them to this singular mildness. Without admitting his shrinking to himself, he was curiously diffident now about exposing the full harshness of his beliefs; by some subtle process he saw that his beliefs, fully expressed, might prejudice him in her eyes.

Already he found a forbidden pleasure in talking to her and the easy pose of her figure aroused an atmosphere of intimacy. It seemed to him actually adventurous to be here in this unaccustomed room, close to this strange woman, confiding his most personal affairs. But into this pleasure there entered also a tinge of tremulous fear.

His eyes had become accustomed to the dim light and now he saw her much more clearly. She was not young by any means; there were little lines at the sides of her eyes, her chin was rounded, her throat full, her figure plump. But withal there was a confusing and alluring touch of worldliness about her that gave him suspicions and made her mysterious.

He felt that she must have known men, must still know them, and because she smiled at him so graciously he was flattered.

For the first time in many years that sort of vanity was aroused that finds a stimulus in the attention of any woman desired by others.

She was speaking now about the hazards of young people.

"While my husband was alive," she said, "I often thought it would be nice to have a boy or a girl—but I've been glad since that they did not come. You

know what I mean—what a care they are, especially if you're alone."

"Yes," he agreed.

"Are you alone, too, Mr. Turner?" she asked.

"Yes," he said.

As the lie passed his lips he was shaken and startled. Why had he so astonishingly denied his wife? He looked at the woman with an almost fearful expression. What strange influence had she acquired so swiftly? It seemed to him that his normal instincts, his customary beliefs, all the solid virtues that ministered to his complacency, had faded in her enervating presence. A new personality possessed him, a new, betraying heart beat in his breast.

For some time they talked together; she told him little conversational things, touched now and then by innuendo, and to these he made monosyllabic replies.

Meanwhile, strange, romantic wantings drifted like vague fogs through his thoughts, little dreams, little expectancies. Their effect was to weaken him. He felt now as if he were capable of some astounding apostasy to his creed, that would embitter his memories for months. Fighting and afraid, he stood up.

"Must you go?" she asked. "Perhaps it's a strange question, but, do you know, Mr. Turner, that I've enjoyed meeting you very much? Even though this is the first time we've ever seen each other I feel almost as if we were old friends!"

She smiled at him very graciously.

"More than that," she went on. "It almost seems to me as if I must have known you at some time or other—no doubt you suggest some friend I've had in the past. You know how that is—you meet someone who gives you a feeling of old times and intimacy right away. You understand?"

He scarcely knew what to say and so he endeavoured to smile, nodding his head in agreement.

She held out her hand; he took it hesitantly.

"I hope this isn't the last time we'll see each other," she said. "Won't you call again, soon, Mr. Turner? I do think that we can be really good friends."

Turner, still grinning insanely, again nodded his agreement, and with an abrupt turn made his escape.

As he passed through the plush curtains the woman stared after his retreating figure speculatively. She was still smiling, but into the expression of her artificial geniality there now came the shadow of more sincere emotions: a trace of regret, a touch of self-depreciation, and a wraith-like reflection of an inner scorn. She heard the door close.

Shrugging her shoulders a little, she left the room.

CHAPTER III

He left the house and came out to the street. He stood on the sidewalk near the marble steps and stared out at his motor drawn up to the curb. His figure seemed loose, his clothes fell about his body in angular, unaccustomed lines, and this laxity of his dress argued some inward flexion in the normal composure of his muscles, and was more remarkedly visible in the furrows that gave expression to his face.

In that instant his countenance suggested the sagging features of a drunken man, the loose lips, the drooping eyelids, the falling chin, the pouched eyes. His entire attitude was one of irresolution and bewilderment.

He passed his hands over his eyes, as if the glare of the morning light affected them. He stepped forward with a curious absence of his ordinary firmness, and got into his car. Sitting in the driver's seat, his hands dropped uselessly over the rung of the wheel, he remained motionless, staring out through the windshield, and seeing nothing.

The world was suddenly and grotesquely unreal to him, even in its familiar externalities. He saw the street, the houses, the passers by, as if through a disconcerting mist; he had lost his

orientation to a world of previous certainties.

Above all, he felt an immense weakness, physical as well as mental, that kept him inert, that chained him for these seconds as if in a marble spell. He began to frown, troubled and distressed.

Turning his head, he looked up at the house which he had just left.

Through the heavy stone front, the curtained windows, the tall, panelled door, he saw the interior, a room, and himself and a woman with whom he had been speaking. A phase of life that he had persistently denied himself —the knowledge of women, the acquaintance of their smiles, of their intimately spoken words, seemed to exist glitteringly in that house before his eyes. . . .

A reaction to this picture, swift as the shock of a voltaic pile, brought his teeth together, stiffened his slouched shoulders, clenched his fingers on the wooden circle of the wheel. He saw in a lurid glare the enormity of his recent conduct.

His thoughts centred upon the lie he had told her, the denial of his wife. From this a myriad inferences radiated like fearful tentacles. His fingers tightened on the wheel and his knuckles stood out misshapen from the sinews of his thin hands. Again he turned, glaring, and looked at the abominable house.

And once more, above the strength of his will, against the power of his denial, his vision renewed the scene from which he had just emerged. His grasp of the wheel loosened and his features relaxed into the curious flexed lines of a few minutes past.

He was seated before her again, speaking to her purely from the impulse of adventurous pleasure, of vague, romantic delight. He felt a return of his sense of youth, a recovery of lost years. He saw her face that seemed romantically experienced. The revolt against his restraints asserted itself beyond the immediate power of his resistance.

The life she represented in his mind attracted him with all the immense force it gathered from the simplicity of his imagination. That which he had frowned upon unflinchingly for years, he wanted—the acquaintance and companionship of women outside and contrary to the permitted rules of conduct. She stood before him in all the vividness of a recent memory, and she attracted him by a spell from which there appeared no escape.

He withdrew his eyes from the house and looked about him swiftly. And then he grew afraid.

It seemed to him that all the people in these tall houses must be staring at him, must be understanding him; for a dreadful second he believed that each man and woman passing by gave him a comprehending gaze. Everybody understood, penetrated his weakness, his falling-off, knew the lie he had told, perceived the forbidden romance that had lured him.

The place became intolerable and the necessity for flight immediate. He stooped and drew back the gear-shift of his car; he let out the clutch and jerked away from the pavement in noisy haste. At the next corner he turned and sped up the intersecting street like a thief leaving the perilous scene of his depredations.

In a moment he was in more crowded streets. The traffic thickened about him and he slowed the car. A necessity for alertness relieved the tense nervousness of his spirits. His expression became almost normal; something of his usual austerity returned to his face.

He drew near the building that housed his offices and turning the machine slowly to the middle of the street parked it and jumped out.

As he entered the lobby of the office building it was impossible to find in his expression any reminiscence of his recent agitation. The elevator starter nodded to him and Turner gave back the salutation with a reserved and dignified inclination of his head.

He went up in the elevator, got out

at the usual floor, and, walking erectly through the hall, came to the frosted glass doors that bore his name.

He turned the knob of one that was marked "Private," and now he was in the inner sanctum from which he directed his affairs.

The sharp, metallic noises of typewriters in rapid operation came in through the door that gave egress to the general office; the sound entered his ears like a soothing music. The world was restored to him in its normal aspect, in its customary proportion. He sat down at his desk, placing his hands upon a pile of letters awaiting his signature. He glanced at his watch; it was past noon. But he was not hungry and a heap of necessary work was before him. He took up his pen and began to sign his name to the bottom of each letter.

Later in the afternoon his secretary came in and announced his wife. The young man was told to show Mrs. Turner in at once.

Dropping his work, he turned in his swivel chair and glanced up at the door. His wife came in, and, without arising, he smiled the small smile of their customary greeting.

"Hello, Alice," he said.

"Are you busy, Richard?"

He glanced about him with satisfaction and an expression of self-approval.

"I'm always busy. That's the only thing for any man."

She looked at him with a familiar concern; she spoke familiar words.

"I'm sure you work too hard!" she exclaimed. "Why don't you rest sometimes? Why don't you come home now and then in the afternoon? I'm so afraid your health is going to fail sooner or later!"

Her forehead, very little concealed by the hair brushed back under her hat and over the tops of her ears, was wrinkled in worried furrows. Her small chin, a little glistening and a little red, expressed a brief, pathetic tribulation. For a dolorous instant her thin lips drooped.

Turner stood up with a mastering gesture and put his hands on her shoulders. She gazed at his face in obvious admiration.

"This is very foolish, Alice," he said. "Every honest man can do his honest day's work, and that's what the good Lord intends. No man was ever harmed by honest effort!"

He uttered these words solemnly and portentously. For a second he remained as he was, looking down at her, feeling the pleasure of his strength and his fidelity. Then he turned back to his desk and resumed his chair.

"I was downtown," she explained. "I thought I'd come in for just a moment. I won't stay; I don't need anything. But please don't disregard everything I say, Richard!"

He smiled again, he looked at her indulgently.

"Everything's all right at home?" he asked.

Once more she was troubled; again her face was wrinkled with her pathetic little worry.

"I'm so upset about John," she murmured, tremulously.

He held up his hand with something of the attitude of a priest pronouncing a benediction. A calm strength, an implacable resolve, an assuring confidence was revealed in his face.

"Don't worry, Alice," he admonished. "The boy is entirely under control. There will be no more tricks from him."

She turned to the door at last and he accompanied her, and stood a moment talking to her after she had gone out into the corridor. She said goodbye; he came back and resumed his place at the desk.

He had not forgotten the woman of his morning's little adventure, and the visit of his wife served to bring her into his thoughts more strongly. But she no longer lured him, and her magic was a departed malignancy. He began to understand her significance—and he raised his eyes for an instant in the attitude of acknowledgment of the higher power above him.

Yes, he understood this woman, and

he comprehended what had seemed, for a terrible hour, like the tottering of his purpose and his strength. It was a warning, a Divine warning! He was strong, stronger than other men, yet he was mortal, and, like all mortality, even he had his weakness.

The Lord, in His goodness, had been pleased to show him that, had been pleased to humble him a little in the instant when he felt most strong. Even *he* might be weak! He was profoundly thankful that the Divine graciousness had made him thus aware of it. By this grace he could be more strong!

CHAPTER IV

For three days his life ran in the channel of its normal course. He went to his office early each morning, leaving behind him the sanctity of his home; he returned in the evening after hours of severe accomplishment, and felt the cold caress of that sanctuary as he came back to it.

During this period, as an act of thankfulness and secret expiation, he subscribed heavily to one of the moral charities that he favoured. This washed him clean like a sacrament of forgiveness. His former faith in himself was wholly restored. And he did not forget to keep a vigilant eye on his young son; John's conduct appeared to be exemplary; he thanked his God that the boy's lapse had been revealed to him in time for his energy and his determination to interpose themselves betwixt the beginning and an inevitably disastrous end.

He walked through the streets as usual, looking at the men and women whom he passed, judging them harshly, and congratulating himself, with a stern, high satisfaction, that he was not as they were.

Then, on the fourth evening, he called on Mrs. Goddard. . . .

He had intended to go home. He was in his car, starting the engine, when his eyes caught the figure of a woman passing on the sidewalk. For a moment he underwent a shock of surprise; he thought she was the one of his adventure. There was a momentary resemblance in her matured form, her dark hair, and in a certain swing to her step. Then he saw his mistake, but it was too late. All his strength was gone.

He did not try to fight, he did not try to recover himself. He knew that he was going to see her. She was before his eyes, a recollection so vivid that it fell little short of a reality. This reaction from his harsh restraint redoubled his yielding. His sense of impending adventure was exalted; it was with none of the common and relatively mild emotions of the ordinary man that Turner went to this woman with whom he knew he had no right to be. That knowledge augmented his delight immeasurably. It gave these seconds a glamour of intoxicating romance.

The car started; he drove it through the street impatiently, a little lax smile twisting the straight lines of his mouth. A curious and unusual feeling of brotherhood with the men he saw on the street warmed his senses. Perhaps they understood that he was not going home to his wife; perhaps they envied him!

He came to her street; he stopped in front of the stone house, grey and mysterious in the night, looming up in glamorous invitation. He got out of the machine, crossed the pavement with a jaunty pace, and before he ascended the marble steps looked about him from right to left with swift turns of his head. There were pedestrians on the street, but no one noticed him, nor attended his manœuvres. He rang the bell and waited.

The maid whom he had seen before answered his ring.

She recognized him and stepped aside for him to enter. He turned in the hall and spoke to her.

"Is Mrs. Goddard at home?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," she replied. "She may be busy just now, but I'll tell her you want to see her."

The girl left him, ascending the stairs to call her mistress.

Turner walked into the remembered room and waited for her. There was a pedestal lamp burning near the wall and the light, passing through its magenta shade, crimsoned all the furnishings.

He walked to a chair and sat down in a real elation of spirit. He was proud that he had come, for he felt then like an adventurer. The soul of intrigue stirred him deeply. How many other men would be glad of his opportunity, would envy his chance, would be jealous of his courage! He was certain she would be glad to see him, recalling her previous graciousness. Like a fabulous discovery, he realized that he had the qualities to attract a woman of her unfathomable experience. Again a real pride thrilled him.

With a little expectant smile on his face, he sat at ease, looking all around the room, that already seemed fully familiar. He stared at the carpet, at the chairs, at the pictures. Again his eyes were attracted by the reproduction of Pagan statuary. He wondered, sly, what the fellow felt like whilst modelling that thing. . . .

Meanwhile, the maid had gone upstairs and turning into her mistress's room, informed her of Turner's visit. The girl withdrew and the woman stood motionless a moment, in a thoughtful pose.

For a few seconds she regretted his coming; she wondered why she had ever encouraged him. He was so unlike the sort of man she could sincerely admire! She recalled his sparse figure, his air of curious absurdity, his lean face, his sinewy hands.

But at least he was a man!

And then, the glamour of his masculinity obliterated his deficiencies. She turned swiftly, crossing to her mirror, and looked earnestly at her reflected face. Rearranging her dark hair, she studied her features critically.

Unhappily, she was surely no longer young. Only her heart was young, in its persistent wanting of romance. For an instant a shadow of melancholy brooding made her eyes and lips grave.

She was remembering the days when her youth would make no compromise, when nothing less than her ideal of a man was tolerable. But that was long ago and with the years had gone her snaring charm for such ones.

Meanwhile, Mr. Richard Turner was waiting below. She would summon her imagination to help her, lacking the ideal reality. Certainly he was not heroic, but doubtless she would be able to forgive him that.

He heard her descending the stairs and he stood up to greet her. She entered the room, smiling as before, holding out her hand.

"So glad to see you!" she cried.

Now his ease vanished and all his embarrassment returned. He found himself with no words on his lips, save a conventional "good-evening." A desperate necessity to say something plagued him, but he was dumb.

She perceived his embarrassment at once, and, walking toward him, took his hand.

"It was good of you to come," she said. "I was wondering what I'd do this evening. I was just thinking how nice it would be to see you again."

She leaned toward him a trifle, smiling intimately up into his face.

"I was afraid you might forget your promise to call," she murmured. "I'm glad you wanted to come! You don't have to tell me, Mr. Turner. That first day you were here I knew you were the sort of man a woman would like to know!"

Her words put him at a greater ease, and giving him the cue she intended, he smiled with self-satisfaction. He squeezed her hand.

"How are you?" he asked.

She withdrew her hand and, walking to a chair, sat down. He turned, took a step toward her, and stood in an awkward pose looking down upon the coils of her mysterious dark hair. He observed her sigh.

"Don't ask me how I am!" she exclaimed.

Tilting back her head, she met his eyes. She was smiling again, but into

the contour of her lips she put a touch of pathos.

"How pleasant to be a man!" she cried. "A man like you. . . . Everything comes so easy to a man like you. I thought about you the other day after you left. I thought of all the women you must have known!"

She raised her eyebrows a little, paused a second, and looked at him, half in reproach, half in admiration.

Seeing the infallible effect of her flattery, she continued with assurance, and with an inward emotion almost too languid for scorn, using well-tried weapons.

" . . . the life you've led! I don't suppose you ever give a thought now to all the girls you've known!"

Then she laughed.

"Well, I don't want you to!" she exclaimed.

He was delighted with her assumptions; he believed them her genuine impression of him. And, in a measure, she was trying to be sincere, trying to believe herself, by the power of her sentimental imagination. She wanted to shroud him in a needed glamour, bestow upon him gifts of necessary allure, appease her self-respect.

Now he was almost confident, and he bent down to her solicitously.

"Why did you sigh a moment ago?" he asked.

She looked up at him with no trace of her recent dolour. She curved her lips mysteriously.

"Never mind!" she cried. "Maybe I'll explain some other time. Have you had dinner yet? I suppose not. Take me out somewhere and let's have a bit of something to eat. We can come back and chat afterwards."

She went upstairs for her wraps; he waited, and, meeting her in the hall, took her arm and they walked toward the door together.

They descended the steps; she was smiling up into his face and walking confidingly close. But an instant of melancholy possessed her. Again she recalled other times and thought of the hours when she was younger and could know the men of her desire. She breathed an inward sigh and the second of her weakness vanished. After all, she was glad of the chance that had brought him—it was no longer easy to be admired. Outdoors, in the dim street, his face seemed less harsh and his figure less angular. He was a man and she needed him.

At her side Turner felt that the austerity of his old life was a remote impossibility, a meagre prison from which his happy fortune had brought him deliverance. He tingled with the pleasant living of life. Thrust into these moments from the daily round of his renunciations, he was like one who moved in a fabulous world, a world of purple shadows. Mysterious shapes appeared to walk before him and all the enticement of belated romance called him.

He helped her into the car and as he took his place at the wheel she inclined herself toward him confidentially. A man passed on the sidewalk and turned his face to look at them; Turner gave back the glance. He was no longer fearful of being seen; he was proud; he was even recklessly desirous that someone whom he knew might observe him with this woman—and envy him! He started the car suddenly and drove with skilful abandon.

He selected a restaurant that he had heard of by name, but never entered. They went in together, arm in arm. He gave his hat to the grasping boy and pausing with the woman at his side waited to be conducted to a table.

He looked about him from right to left. He walked erect with the air of a conqueror, assured that no one would believe her his wife. The rouge on her cheeks and lips, the powder on her face and white throat, the upward tilt of her head to meet his eyes, and the lowering of her pigmented lashes, denied that. But if he could have made it known by loud personal assertion he would have done so, for to all these people he wanted to appear surely as a lord of romance!

Here and there he caught the eye

of some man looking at him and he met these stares arrogantly. He held her arm closely, he bent toward her. To him she represented all the romantic repression of years.

They sat down at a small table lighted by a small *electrolière*. Its pink shade, throwing a glow on her face, made her countenance glamorously unreal.

A waiter came to take their order.

"Bring us a couple of cocktails first," Turner demanded.

"Yes, sir. What sort do you wish?"

"Oh . . ." he began.

He waved his arm in a dismissing gesture. He paused at a loss. And she rescued him.

"Make mine a Clover Club," she said.

"Yes," he said. "Bring us two of those."

She leaned across the table, smiling at him intimately.

"It's good to be here with you," she murmured. "With a man like you . . ."

CHAPTER V

When he swallowed a mouthful of the cocktail the alcoholic fumes ran up into his nose, brought the tears to his eyes, and seemed to paralyze, with an abominable choking sensation, the normal processes of respiration. He took a swift swallow of water and recovered himself.

But the effect was surprising. A glow, warm and suffusing, expanded from his central interior to his remote extremities, mounted to his brain, and augmented his sense of extravagant pleasure and delight.

At that moment he thought of his wife.

He had not telephoned her; she would not understand his absence. A quick fear came to him; he looked about hastily, as if, by some impossible chance, she might be there, observing his perfidy.

He stood up quickly.

"Excuse me a minute," he said.

He hurried to a telephone booth in the lobby and called his home. His wife's voice greeted him, and he felt a strange new emotion in lying to her, a pleasant feeling of mastery at her easy belief. Turning to his table again, he walked toward it in eager haste.

Looking up at him in mock reproach, the woman surveyed him with an expression of mock reprimand.

"I know whom you were talking to," she said.

He smirked at her declaration, questioning her with raised brows.

"Some poor, innocent little trusting one at home!" she said in a low voice. "How ashamed you ought to be of yourself! But you aren't, are you? A man like you never knows anything about shame, does he?"

For emphasis she suddenly delighted him by pressing his foot under the table.

"But you didn't deceive me, did you? I knew that first morning you came. I suppose Miss Hollins or your son told you something about me. You came to see *me*. And then you invented that story about being a widower and all alone!"

He was confused and he was pleased. It occurred to him then that circumstances played into his hands with a desiderate ease. He deceived her so easily and she knew so much of men! She had never questioned his character; she had assigned him to the rôle of adventurer from the first instant of their encounter.

She felt a sure strength within him and was conscious of a genius for intrigue. He was a master of women and even this one of experience was tricked by his cleverness.

His eyes roamed over the large room and into his vision came a swift impression of other women there, snatches of laughing lips, a sweep of yellow hair, a rouged cheek, a significant eye. The romance of the world seemed to expand for him, like unguessed buds of crimson blossoms coming in an instant to flower. All the world was full of mysterious adventure!

In a caressing, intimate voice she was speaking to him.

"But you know I'm not sorry that you came—and told me all those easy lies!"

Then, as she had done an hour before, in her home, she uttered a soft, incomprehensible sigh.

For a moment she rested her chin in the palm of her plump hand. She looked down at the white cloth in pensive melancholy.

"What's the matter . . . little one . . .?"

He saw that she accepted his endearment without surprise, without raising her eyes to his own. She sighed again.

"Tell me what's wrong?" he questioned. "You looked as if you were troubled just before we came out this evening."

"You're too observant," she said.

This was pleasing; Turner smiled.

"I wish I had been born a man!" she murmured.

"Why?"

"Oh, you men are so free! Just think of yourself—a man of your sort. You go about and do what you please, you have so much in your life . . ."

She paused, looked at him through partially closed eyes and laughed insinuatingly.

"We women are more or less in a prison," she declared.

Turner was thoroughly flattered. He believed, although he had never played it, that he must have been made for this romantic rôle, for she never seemed to surmise how new it was to him. His pride was augmented at this discovery of his unexpected proficiency. He looked across at her with a self-conscious and satisfied smile.

She was staring down at the cloth, drumming with her fingers. Her expression was melancholy.

"You haven't confessed anything yet," he reminded her. "What is the matter?"

"There's nothing much to confess. I guess I'm fortunate anyway. It just came to me now, though, how much better it is to be a man—you don't have to depend on chance."

Turner still regarded her inquiringly.

"Being a man, you go out and find what you want," she continued. "You don't have to be lonely."

She spoke touchingly and Turner's sentimentality was moved.

"You've been lonely?" he asked.

"Oh, yes. . . . One meets people, of course, but then you don't care to know just any man, do you? But I'm lucky!"

The subtle inference was gratifying. His imagination portrayed her as a woman indifferent to the men she had known, the recent acquaintances—until he came. He had possessed the qualities to arouse her interest. It was surprising, it was warming—this new world in which he discovered himself so easily a master. He leaned back a little with something of the manner of a conqueror. In that instant he felt supremely romantic.

"We're both lucky," he ventured.

"Do you honestly believe so?"

"Yes; it was only by luck, after all, that I discovered you."

"Have you been glad?"

"Very!"

She smiled; she leaned across the table, and her features expressed shades of vague meaning.

"We've grown to be good friends already, haven't we, dear?" she asked. "I wonder how much better we'll know each other? Isn't this just the beginning for us? Don't you think so?"

Turner nodded, wholly in agreement. For some minutes they were silent, she continued to look at him, and both were portentously serious.

In a measure now she found his face more agreeable. His harsh features were relaxed and she had already invested them with a certain enhancing glamour. She even persuaded herself that in claiming his interest so readily she had achieved a degree of triumph. This conviction of success restored some of her precious sense of youth.

She was not yet old; she still possessed a charm. The last decade of her life had taught her the necessity of

compromise. He was not the man that dreams might have revealed to her, but at this time of life it was too dangerous to dream. One must accept the actuality. He was real; he was better than a dream.

Nevertheless, she was not wholly content. Admixed with her emotions were a peculiar melancholy, vague regrets, even a touch of self-contempt. She did not probe these less agreeable feelings, but, faintly shrugging her shoulders, as if to shake off their depression, she began to speak again.

She told Turner some intimate things about herself, exacting his confidences in return. She questioned him about his wife, whom he fully disparaged.

"She doesn't understand me," he claimed.

"Of course not! I know, I can see. I realize what sort of a woman she is. Do you know, dear, I'm glad though you *have* a wife! It makes it so much more interesting for you and me! Don't you see? Just like a French novel! I think the French are such *marvellous* people! They're so unafraid! One of my friends once told me that I reminded him so much of the French women!"

Turner nodded.

"I believe he was right," he agreed, sagely.

CHAPTER VI

LEAVING the restaurant together, he again walked intimately at her side. He almost forgot, curiously enough, the presence of watchers. The woman herself served to engross him. She was a stimulus to his imagination, she filled him with curiosity and wonder. He regarded her as one who knows nothing of women and finds in a single woman all the subtle mysteries and endless allure of her sex. She was strange, she was beyond his understanding. He saw her as a creature of undreamed adventure, disregarding conventions with a careless ease. Whilst his imagination could conceive her in a measure, a joyful one, some lack of the same faculty prevented his comprehension of her. But he accepted her, he walked near her, he took her smiles like wanted coinage.

Helping her into his car, he started the motor in the direction of her home. Grasping the wheel, he leaned toward her so that his arm lightly touched hers. Driving with none of his customary caution, he turned his eyes again and again from the street for the dangerous chance of meeting her gaze. He was glad when he came to her home; he helped her out of the car with nervous pleasure.

Now he was at a loss how to proceed. His confidence, strangely enough, had left him suddenly. The house, looming up dimly in the night, was in some way fearful; he wanted to go in with her, yet he was afraid. Again he felt that everyone must be watching him and his shoulders drooped with a sense of guilt.

She was standing on the pavement, smiling, waiting.

"Aren't you coming in?" she asked. "We can still have a little chat."

Despite his wanting, his fears prevented him from following her. He was no longer sustained by his conviction of romantic mastery. He shook his head.

"I'm sorry," he muttered. "I really must go now. Let me come to-morrow."

Surprised, she hesitated, and, leaning toward him a little, endeavoured to discern the expression on his face.

"What's the matter?" she asked. "Won't you come in?"

"Not now!" he repeated. "I'll come to-morrow."

She laughed a little dubiously.

"Well, good-night, then . . ." she said.

"Good-night," he returned.

He heard her cross the pavement, go up the steps and the door closed behind her. He stood there a moment, motionless, torn with conflicting hesitations. He thought of following her, calling to her, endeavouring to overtake her in the hall. But his strange fears denied him the courage, and his

puzzled emotions left him inactive. Finally, with the slouch of one who is defeated, he turned and stepped into his car.

He drove home in a stupor of imagination and emotion. The world was again unreal to him, but its unreality lacked any acuteness; he was dull, his mind was without thought, he was as if drugged. It was early when he reached home, but the lights were out and his wife was in bed. He undressed in the dark, moving about noiselessly so as not to awaken her.

Then, as he lay down beside her, vast retributive shapes seemed to come out of the darkness and enter into his spirit like furies of remorse. An appalling fear assailed him; he clenched his fists beneath the thin covers; he stared up at the dark ceiling in pitiful distress. The knowledge of his enormity arose luridly in his comprehension. All his recent acts, all his recent thoughts, all his lies and admissions, stood out in his mind like separate imps of torment, each one the threat of a reckoning. He turned in the bed, he turned his face into the yielding pillow, but no cringing posture gave ease to his tortured spirit.

Each of his beliefs was impotent, each of his faiths was dumb. It seemed to him that he had lost his soul, and the terror of the thought wrenched his muscles in a sudden contraction. The man that had been was gone, and a new being, a fleshy weakness, a prideless creature, lay there in his place. He was weak! He was terrifyingly, appallingly weak! This was no test, this was no Divine showing of his human frailty! He had collapsed, he had surrendered, he had failed!

Then in his extremity he began to pray.

He uttered his prayer silently, moving his parched lips to make the shapes of the unspoken words, and he cast his eyes up into the darkness in profound and moving supplication.

"Save me!" he pleaded. "Save me from my weakness and my temptation! Save me from all my temptations! Keep me from the devil; keep me from the fires of hell—in the name of the Lord!"

He lay still for a moment and, as if in Divine answer to these words of his romantic faith, a calmness came over him, and little by little an old grim determination entered his spirits. His strength returned to him; an impalpable antagonist slunk away in silence, in the darkness. He felt his pulses beat strongly at his thin wrists, and his purpose loomed up implacably in his heart.

He would atone! He would repay the guilt of his weakness. He would make the path of sinners hard and their way a road of thorns. A harsh enmity to all that laughed, to all that sought the pagan sunshine, to the men who knew women and the women who gave their easy kisses stirred him like the summons to battle. He felt the strength of a destroying angel pulsing in his meagre veins.

He closed his eyes and he slept.

CHAPTER VII

It seemed to Turner, as he drove to work the next morning, that the interest of life had somehow been freshened for him, made more keen, made more desirable. He had never felt so strong, so full in his strength to combat temptation. In a measure he had some of that sensation that a sincere crusader must have had as he buckled on his armour and rode out upon a holy quest. He felt conquering, he felt heroic.

He came into his office with an inner frenzy of renunciation. The lines of his countenance were never more austere.

Later in the morning he began to think definitely about Mrs. Goddard. He experienced no weakness as he contemplated her memory. But he felt a bitterness, he knew an anger. Such women were the curse of living, the betrayers of men's purpose and men's strength.

The provocation of their charm set fearful mirages before the sure tread of righteousness.

He began to think specifically of him-

self in his relation to her, and then he saw that the last words had not been spoken between them. He and she must have another meeting.

But this time how different a coming together! His pride demanded that he justify himself in the eyes of his conscience, that he exhibit himself to this creature in his true measure, in his genuine character, in his full strength. This idea, developing gradually in his thoughts, flamed there suddenly as an inspiration might, a matured and definite necessity. This was the urgency undeniable: he must see her!

He began to imagine their meeting, to think of the words he would say. His unsmiling face would look at her grimly and his tongue would spare her none of his thoughts. He would reveal the essentials of her life to her in their fundamental shamelessness until shame itself would succeed with its deeper blush the artifice of the rouge upon her cheeks. And he would leave her at last with a warning and a pointing finger, with the prophetic words of her final degradation. As he thought of these things his eyes brightened, his lips compressed themselves into an eager line and he wished the moment of his justification with all his capacity of wanting.

He saw no reason for delay and so he thought he might meet her any time in the day—at noon perhaps. The instant that a time of meeting occurred to him his eagerness was augmented and tormented him to action. He took the telephone book from his desk and found her name and number. He called at once.

A female voice said hello to him; it was probably the maid. He asked for Mrs. Goddard. She was there; he waited.

Then he heard her voice in inquiry.

"This is Turner," he said.

"Oh! . . ."

She drew out the monosyllable languorously, in pleasure, in suggestion, in surprise, in subtle invitation. He felt within him the beginning of a curious response, even a suggestion of fear, and he spoke to her rapidly, endeavouring to thrust out these alien feelings from his senses.

"I want to see you to-day," he said. "I want you to meet me somewhere, at lunch if you can. I'll take you to lunch. There are things that I must tell you."

"Yes! Of course!" she agreed. "I expected to come to town anyway. Isn't that convenient? It's delightful that you called. How are you . . . dear?"

Again he experienced the stir of unwanted sentiment. He struggled with it, he thrust it back.

"I'm all right," he said harshly.

For an instant she was silent. Then, as she spoke again, her voice came subdued over the wire.

"You sound awfully queer," she said. She paused again. Then her voice became more intimate, more confidential.

"How stupid I am!" was her soft exclamation. "Of course you're calling from your office. You can't talk to me as you'd like to from there. I understand, dear. Just tell me where I can see you, and I'll come any time you say."

He did not dispute her inferences, lacking somehow the immediate courage. "It is better to wait," he thought. "Let her be unsuspecting."

He considered a moment.

"Perhaps it's better if I come for you," he told her. "Wait until I call."

He hung up the receiver abruptly, in an emotion of fear at her voice that he feebly explained in terms of distaste. Now that the appointment was made, he endeavoured to forget her. He took up the business details that were waiting his attention, knitted his brows, tightened his teeth, tried to concentrate upon them. But she returned to his mind like a plague; she would not leave his thoughts. Again and again he found himself looking at his watch, impatient with the slowly passing minutes.

At last he found that it was nearly noon and he stood up from his desk in relief, as one who puts aside a disagreeable and unwanted task. He ad-

justed his hat and walked out of the office.

When he came out to the street there was a peculiar confusion in his mind and this lack of clarity tortured him. He could not recall his singleness of purpose, that austere intent so strong in him an hour or two before. He got into his car under a cloud, as one who has just awakened from a deep sleep to whom the waking hours are not yet clearly disentangled from the vague and shifting phantasma of consciousness. He turned into the stream of traffic troubled and disturbed.

When he reached her house he found it disconcertingly familiar in its daylight aspect; the brown walls, the darkened steps, the shaded windows, the atmosphere of experiences superior to his own, seemed to mock him.

Leaving his machine, he went up the steps mechanically.

It was the woman herself that came in answer to his ring.

She held out her hand to him; as if under the unwilling spell of some force too urgent for his weak denial, he took it.

"I'm ready," she said. "Just wait for me a moment. I only have to put on my hat. Don't you think I'm an exception among women?"

He said nothing. He wanted to deny her smile, to deny his acquiescence in the subtle comradery of her touch, to refute her air of mutual conspiracy. And his lips were silent and his tongue was dumb. She pressed his hand again and then, half running through the hall, she hurried up the stairs.

He looked after her in discomfort and confusion.

She returned quickly and took his arm as he stood in the hall. They walked together toward the door, out of the house in this intimacy that his lips did not deny. Her face was turned to him, sideways and upwards. She talked with eagerness and vivacity, and he listened, agreeing, by his silence or by the monosyllables of his answers, to all her intimations. No strength of denial was in him, nor courage of his former purpose.

"When you left last night," she said, "I wondered if you would keep your promise and come to-day—and here we are together again, so soon! You seem to read my thoughts through the air and know that way what I want. I wanted you to call this morning and when the maid told me that someone was on the 'phone, I knew it was you! Don't you believe thoughts *are* transferred, and we *know* such things? I knew you were thinking of me this morning!"

Speaking to him, she watched him keenly, for he was her problem. She was quickly sensible of his abstraction, of some inner discomfort, but in her wisdom and experience she ignored it. She continued to talk to him, like a familiar companion, with deft suggestion, with naïve smiles. She did not press him to answer her; she made her conversation as gay as she could.

And little by little she saw him warmed by her speech, and the former sentimental light return to his eyes. She drew her breath in relief; her confidence was returned to her.

He stopped his car in front of the café in which they had eaten the night before. He stepped out and held his hand for her to alight, awkwardly, with the self-consciousness of one to whom such actions are not familiar. And as he turned, taking her arm, walking near to her, and stepped toward the door of the restaurant, he saw a little woman standing on the sidewalk, a few yards distant, immobile and staring, staring at himself and his companion.

She was dressed in bulgy, familiar clothes, she wore an unbecoming hat and the white surprise of her pale face terrified him. It was his wife.

The woman at his side felt the contraction of his arm. She saw the quick turn of his head, then his lowered face, and the pallor that came to his features. He hastened toward the door. Just as they entered her backward glance, searching a cause, encountered the figure of the small, ineffectual little

woman who stared after them. She understood.

Had it been necessary, the confirming of her suspicions would have come from the aspect of her companion as they sat down opposite each other at one of the tables. His face was pallid; there was real fright in his eyes. The discovery took him without plans, without forethought, without preparation. In that moment it seemed calamitous and final. All the elaborate structure of his life appeared to have fallen about him, and he stood shameful in the débris. She would expose him and everybody would know! Fear, that had been the deep motive of all his past virtue, possessed him like an unescapable demon.

The woman across the table divined his sensations. A certain pity came into her feelings, and with this the natural desire to save the situation. But she was pleased; what an exciting situation! She leaned toward him, speaking to him intimately.

"I understand," she said. "That was your wife, wasn't it? Don't be worried, dear! You can easily tell her something to explain. We'll think of something together. . . ."

He raised his eyes to her own and her words arrested the torturing course of his emotions. Suddenly he realized that such situations must have come to her in past experience. The colour returned to his face; he looked at her with hope.

"Your wife has never seen us together before," she went on. "I might be anybody . . . anybody. Don't be worried. It's really nothing."

She paused an instant to give him a smile of reassurance.

"Tell her anything at all. I might be the wife of one of your business acquaintances. We were meeting my husband here, say. Or—"

She went on, facilely inventing lies, and as she talked all the situation cleared itself for him. His agitation of the moment before seemed absurd. His own ingenuity asserted itself and as she elaborated her deceptions he thought of others, evolving in his brain a ready stream of plausibilities that paralleled her own.

He began to smile. Like her, he felt the romance of the situation.

"Yes," he muttered awkwardly. "It's all right. I was upset for a second. A surprise, you know. . . ."

Nevertheless, he was still uneasy. They did not linger long at luncheon. He promised to call her on the telephone very soon and they left the restaurant separately. As Turner came out he looked anxiously up and down the street.

His wife was nowhere about.

CHAPTER VIII

ENTERING his office, he found her sitting at his desk.

As she caught sight of him the pent tears rushed into her eyes, overflowed at the corners and cut two channels to the outer edges of her lips. She dropped her face in her hands and her shoulders shook with sobs.

"Alice!" he exclaimed, endeavouring to give his voice a convincing assurance. "What's the matter with you?"

Her answer was an audible sob.

He walked over to her and put his hands under her chin. He turned up her wet face against the opposition of her weak resistance. He regarded her with sternness and surprise.

"What does this mean?" he asked.

"Y-you too!" she cried, and choked with the convulsions of her shoulders.

He still forced her face upward and he bent over her, bringing his own face close.

"Alice!" he demanded. "You must stop this! And what do you mean? What do you expect me to take from 'you too'?"

"Oh, that terrible woman you were with!" she cried. "Going into a restaurant!"

He dropped his hands. He took a step backward. His eyes narrowed and his countenance grew immeasurably stern. All his capacity for pretence,

the unconscious development of a lifetime of pretending, lent sincerity to his harsh face.

"Alice!" he thundered.

Like a sudden explosion, his tone startled her. A fearful doubt entered her mind, and a consoling one. She turned her head quickly and met his eyes. Her glance quivered before the outraged dignity of his gaze like that of a child before an angry and feared parent. She began to mop her cheeks nervously, with a little handkerchief rolled into a limp ball in her small hand.

"I am deeply surprised!" he exclaimed. "More than that, I am shocked. I never dreamed that there would be a scene of this sort between you and me. You suspected *me!*"

His accusations entered her ears like the voice of an avenging angel. At once she saw the immense folly of her disastrous suspicions. Her spirit quailed in misery and terror. Between the lines of her teeth she bit the end of her hasty, unlucky tongue. And in tremendous dignity her husband stared down at her.

Then she collapsed. She dropped her head into the curve of her elbow; her forehead touched the unyielding glass plate on his desk.

"Forgive me!" she sobbed. "Oh, forgive me! I've had a terrible morning—a terrible thing has happened. All my nerves are gone. John's awful action made me suspect even you. . . ."

Her voice trailed off into incoherencies.

For a moment the mention of his son's name brought Turner no definite impressions. He was thinking solely of himself. His counterfeited sense of outrage had become real; he had brought conviction to his own mind. The words of his wife had been infamous.

He was fully assured now that had not the accident of her discovery intervened, he would have carried out his original intent, to warn that woman, to shame her, to point out the deep degradation of her life.

For several seconds he stood erect in majestic anger, like a prince before an impudent courtier. And then he realized that she had spoken of his son. He took a quick step toward her collapsed form.

"What do you mean by John's action?" he asked.

For a moment after the utterance of his query the noisy flood of her tears prevented her speech. At last she looked at him, the symbol of woe. She began a sobbing narrative.

The infamous girl, the painted creature of John's previous misdemeanour, had returned. Or perhaps she had never gone; it might have been a clever lie. But in the morning, going into her son's room, the mother had found a note. John told her he had gone; he was defiant; he even gave the address of a hotel.

"By to-morrow," he concluded, "we will be married. Tell father that if he wants to see me, he can come here."

Before she had concluded her recital, that broke at times into wordless, convulsive movements of her larynx, Turner had seen the necessity for action and determined upon it. With his anger came an assurance, a certitude that he would not be too late, that he would be in time to stamp out this infamy and this sin against the honour of his name. He remembered the girl as he had first seen her, walking the street with his own son, in the shamelessness of her kind. He recollected her face, he recalled all the details of her dress, and like flaunting words these memories raised up the fire of his anger and the strength of his determination.

He made little effort to comfort his wife. In that moment there was no time to consider her. Nevertheless, in a buried recess of his mind, waiting for a later exploitation, he foresaw the grim pleasure he would take in revenge, the pain he would bring for her unjust suspicions of himself, the pleading of forgiveness he would wring from her tormented spirit. All his being stirred with the complex urgency of the moment.

His activity was masterly. He took

Alice out of the office, downstairs, and sent her home in a taxi. He saw her white, distracted face looking at him in hope and desperate appeal as he crossed the street to get into his car. Then the cab disappeared in the crowded thoroughfare, and, climbing into his own machine, he started the engine and swung into the traffic with terse, harsh manipulations of the gears. His jaw was set into a hard line of inconquerable resolution.

As he neared the hotel a plan was fully matured in his mind. Unless it were unavoidable, he did not intend to see his son. He would interview the girl; if she were absent he would ascertain the probable moment of her return; by threats, by coercion, by bribes he would make her disappear. Then his boy would be a plastic humiliation in his implacable hands, a subject for the bitter impress of a father's scorn.

He smiled a little as he saw the hotel near the end of the street into which he turned. He was certain of his righteous success.

He got out and walked into the lobby. Approaching the desk clerk, he asked for Miss Hollins.

"I'll see if she's in her room, sir."

"If you find her," he instructed, "tell her that Mr. Turner, Senior, wants to talk to her."

There was a brief interval of waiting and then the clerk told him that she would be downstairs in a few minutes.

He took a seat near the registry desk and waited. Men and women passed and all seemed weak to him; he scorned their flabby souls! All the world seemed doomed in a whirlpool of weak indulgence and his silent indignation expressed itself in venomous thoughts. Then, watching the elevator, he saw the girl step out.

He arose quickly and approached her.

"You are Miss Hollins, I believe," he said.

"Oh!" she exclaimed. In her brazen effrontery she smiled a shameless smile. "This is Johnny's papa! Awfully glad to know you, Mr. Turner!"

She held out her hand, but ignoring her extended fingers he inclined his body in a rigid bow. She looked at him a second and then laughed. Her voice was penetrating and the vulgar noise of her laughter arrested the curious eyes of loungers in their cushioned chairs.

"Oh . . ." she drawled out. "You're terribly mad, aren't you? Well, let's go and sit down and then you can pan me all you like."

She turned swiftly and led him to a sofa standing against a remote pillar. He resented her action, resented her initiative. He followed her slowly, with an angry frown cutting deep lines between his small eyes.

She seated herself, smoothed down her dress, and grinned at him with an expression of vague sarcasm.

"Yes," she continued. "Johnny told me you were likely to take it hard. But we're going to go ahead and be married. He's a nice boy and you're bound to get used to me sooner or later."

He stared at her sternly, for the moment without words. She leaned toward him a little, lifting her eyebrows in mock concern.

"You don't like me at all, do you?" she asked.

He clenched his fists on his knees.

"No!" he exclaimed.

She widened her eyes in a simulation of astonishment. Turner thrust out his face and glared into her own.

"Miss Hollins," he said, "my son hasn't a cent of money; he's absolutely dependent upon me. He hasn't even a profession. . . . He knows nothing about money. I had intended to take him into my business and his prospects were quite good on that account. I guess he's deceived you."

She shrugged her shoulders.

"No—I knew all that. You'll come around."

"If you can believe anything that's absolutely final," said Turner, with a slow impressiveness, "I'll tell you this, young lady: if my son marries you there's nothing more he can expect

from me. Nothing! Perhaps *you're* able to support him?"

He waited for her comment. She drew out a small mirror from her handbag and examined her face carefully, flecking a bit of powder from her cheek and turning her head from side to side in apparent unconcern.

"Well?" she asked finally.

"I suppose you see now that you were mistaken," said Turner. He paused a moment and in that second decided on an immediate directness of attack.

"And now," he continued, "because I want to save my son, I'll propose something that will be of appeal to a person like you. If you will consent to leave this hotel immediately, and never see my boy again, I'll write you a suitable cheque. I'll make it payable one week from to-day; meanwhile, I'll keep watch on the boy, and if I find you've kept the agreement, my bank will honour it then. . . ."

He fastened his eyes upon her face, watching her lips for the words she would say, confident of her answer.

She turned her head swiftly and met his eyes. Her features were suddenly serious, her chin tilted a little forward, her attitude one of pride.

"Mr. Turner," she said, "I'm a different sort of woman than you imagine. Do you think I'm rotten enough to betray—"

She stopped suddenly. Her opening words had scarcely been sufficient to shake his assurance, to bring the shade of consternation to his features. And then she laughed. She leaned sideways; she touched his knee with her slim hand.

"Say!" she exclaimed. "I pretty near scared you, didn't I? Well, be calm. Suppose we talk about the size of that cheque!"

CHAPTER IX

THE afternoon was half over as he left the hotel. Coming out again to the street his feelings were a complexity of satisfactions and unfulfilments. In concluding his conversation with the girl he had tried to make her conscious of her infamy, to bring some evidence of shame to her cheeks. In this he had failed.

She had laughed at him. And in her laughter there seemed a subtle suggestion, a something slyly and unfathomably accusing, as if she detected in him a certain secret weakness that made of his righteousness a pretence and of his words a grotesque folly. He was frowning as he drove away in his car.

He was not satisfied. He had saved his son and in a measure defeated an evil purpose, but after all only by a compromise. In that moment he had no fear of vice; he held in his hands the weapon of his sufficing strength, a destroying sword and an invulnerable shield. He wished to flay the vicious, to humiliate the weak, to bring them hurt and repentance. The ancient wish of the chase was in his veins—and he thought of Mrs. Goddard.

Through a disturbing accident, that he did not pause to examine in all its phases, he had not been able to carry out his purpose with her at noon. Once more, and stronger than before, he burned with the wish to face her and with searing words reveal himself in his true aspect, heap the words of his contempt on her weak defencelessness, hear her cry out for mercy—and show no mercy! He knew then that he would go to her at once and accuse her in her own home. Upon this decision his spirits lightened with a dull thrill of expectation.

As he approached the street where she lived he held no thought of his past weakness. It seemed to him then that his purpose had been exalted from the first; that he had regarded her in the initial instant of meeting as the chosen sinner to destroy. As of old, he felt that emotion of dauntless superiority, subject for correction, the necessary, the romantic conviction of inspiration, the certitude of a heaven-sent aim. He came into her street and in a consciousness of abounding strength rang the bell at her door.

The maid admitted him at once.

He waited in the hall for her to come downstairs. The drawing-room curtains were closed and the hall was dim. Standing near the curtains, his figure seemed taller, thinner, harsher, and more implacable. His hands hung stiffly at his sides; from moment to moment he glanced up the stairs.

He saw not the woman coming down, but her servant returning.

"Mrs. Goddard says to come right up, sir," she told him.

Surprised, but with no hesitation, Turner began the ascent. He glowed with eagerness; his lips were tight; his jaw was firm; the lids of his eyes were puckered, like the squint of a short-sighted person.

He reached the upper hall and at the end saw an opened door.

He walked toward it resolutely. Without pausing, he entered the room.

He had never been in this chamber before. An odour of perfume was in the air and the scent of it strangely enervated him. Before anything else the general effect of the room impressed itself upon him—the table littered with little bottles, an opened powder-box, a manicuring set, a carelessly dropped handkerchief edged with fragile lace, and all duplicated in an oval mirror before which they lay; a little stool, almost covered with a large, brocaded cushion; the chairs ornamented with flowered embroideries—the indefinable, the unaccustomed, the mysterious feminine atmosphere that pervaded this room like an unseen and potent presence. And near the window, in an easy pose, sat the woman.

She did not rise; she looked up, smiling at him. Her smile arrested the words that had seemed so ready on his lips.

He wanted to understand the meaning of her greeting, and the feeling that she was romantically unfathomable kept him silent, gave him a sense of fear, as before a being superior to himself.

For a second he thought of the reason of his coming. For a moment he struggled to retain the sternness of his features. But the perfume of that room, the strange femininity of that setting, relaxed the harsh lines of his face. He looked at the woman and his romantic imagination gave him thoughts that swept all others from his mind.

He felt like a cavalier, he felt like a daring knight.

His sternness went from him as if for ever, like a spirit taking wings.

She was speaking to him.

"I thought I wouldn't come down," she said. "It's so comfortable here in my little sitting-room, don't you think? We can chat here much more nicely!"

She looked up at him with what archness she could muster and with a gay expression. She felt almost girlish, almost young again. In a way, this instant revived other years, joined the present hour with the past. She was still young; she was still wanted!

Turner had not yet spoken. He was suddenly entranced by sentimental and visionary delights. He looked at the woman: she was mysterious! But gazing at her, he was confounded by an incredible realization.

He saw suddenly that he was about to exact a repetition of all their former meetings, a yielding to weakness, a faltering of his purpose. A great fear possessed him, and with it, as a sort of desperate corollary, a renewal of his intent.

He stared at the woman, seeing her reddened cheeks and lips, and the abhorrent archness of her smile. His sternness returned; an exaltation stirred in his spirits.

He began to speak, feeling in his renunciation almost a sense of blessed martyrdom.

"You've made a grave mistake!" he said.

Her smile had not yet left her lips, but a gathering cloud obscured her features. Seeing the solemnity of his face, she felt a touch of apprehension. Her eyebrows lifted in inquiry.

"But I'm glad you had me come up here, where I can be alone with you. This afternoon I have many things to tell you!"

She was staring now.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"I've waited for this moment!" he went on. "I've tested you; I've looked into the frailty of your unhappy soul! In your pitiful weakness, you have misunderstood me, you have failed to know me!"

He paused, and now all his regrets were gone. The words that passed his lips seemed to reverberate in his ears; he was truly exultant. Continuing again, his voice expanded, took on a solemn dignity, rose and fell in majestic cadence, deepened in tone, throbbed with conviction.

"Look into your life!" he cried. "Open your eyes and see! What are you doing with your years? What have you done with your shame? That false colour on your cheeks—rub it off forever, and let the blush of shame glow there, and repentance enter your heart!"

He inhaled a deep, audible breath.

With the first words of his harangue she had been startled; then she leaned forward in her chair, gripping the arms with tense hands. But looking up at his gaunt figure and his solemn face, an immediate amusement deprived her of alarm. After all, she was not surprised; to a sufficient degree she understood him.

She recalled the morning of their first meeting, when he had come to her home expecting to devour little Miss Hollins. Poor fellow, he had been shaken up to-day; dreadfully frightened, no doubt, after the encounter with his wife. But he *was* amusing. He was really serious!

She was unable to restrain herself any longer. She began to laugh.

He was speaking again, but at the ripple of her surprising laughter he paused. It shook his assurance, his lips trembled faintly, he faltered a little.

She arose, still laughing a little, and took a step toward him.

"Don't joke with me!" she admonished. "Don't—"

Desperately he thrust rejecting hands before him.

"Joke!" he thundered. "Woman, I'm here to save your immortal soul! I'm here to show you the way, the path, the light! I've come to save you, to chasten your spirit, to give you the word. I've come—"

Expanding sonorously his voice filled the room as if with words of apostolic pronouncement. Mrs. Goddard paused, standing in front of him, and at the same time she restrained the outward evidence of her amusement.

After all, it would not do to offend him, and, from the impulse of a certain tenderness, she shrank from that anyway. She felt so sure of him that it was best to let him orate to the contentment of his heart; you always had to grant this right to men.

Moreover, hearing his voluptuous voice, witnessing his waving arms, she felt a suggestion of fascination.

There was just a touch of religious mysticism in this moment; his cheeks were flushed, his eyes were glowing, and she found him enhanced with a measure of new romantic mystery.

Half amused, half impressed, the inspiring idea of victory by yielding came into her mind. She stood in front of him, endeavouring to look abashed.

"Forgive me!" she murmured.

His voice ceased, and he listened.

She looked up at him, her eyes meeting his stern gaze. Then she moved toward him, her head tilted back, her face glowing, a carmine colour of excitement blotting out the fixed tint on her cheeks. In a gesture of mixed admiring and supplication, she raised her arms and rested her hands on his shoulders.

"How wonderful you are!" she exclaimed. "What beautiful words you can say! I'll do anything you say; teach me! I never knew anyone like you! Forgive me; don't leave me; you'll never leave me, will you? Oh, I need you, I need a man that can teach me like you. I never knew any man like you. Tell me that you won't go away from me!"

She paused, assured and tender. Looking down into her face, an immense fervour possessed him. He felt all the thrill of victory and she was his disciple!

Then, in his exultation, feeling her tightening arms about him, he raised his own and embraced her. He bent down to her face and kissed her.

Her eyes were half closed.

"I'll always have you, won't I?" she whispered.

"Yes!" he replied.

Now, drawing down his head, it was she who kissed him. Her amusement was nearly gone and upon her face only the emotion of romantic victory found expression. Perhaps he might rebel again, but she was sure of him, and this enhanced the allure of their relation. At last she had her man!

Holding her in his arms, Turner felt a little dazed. Somehow, in the very moment of triumph, in the instant when all his strength seemed sustained, the suggestion of defeat returned to him. Something had eluded him; in some subtle way he had failed. He wanted to speak, but there seemed no words to say.

She was still embracing him, and again smiling. With an expression that mingled pleasure with despair, he kissed her again.

I HAVE REMEMBERED

By Glenn Ward Dresbach

I HAVE remembered more than I have forgotten—
Old winter rains that chilled me come again
Across dead grass and leaves crushed down and rotten,
And claw-like ghosts upon my window pane.

And old loves come bereft of olden passion,
And old hopes whisper on a wind that dies—
Why is it that I laugh now, in my fashion,
And kiss your lips and look into your eyes?

SUSPENSE in the movies: The ten-minute period required by the hand of the bomb clock to move from three minutes to twelve to twelve o'clock.

NO women are ever true friends until they are past forty.

THE FAITHFUL HUSBAND

By Elsie McCormick

MY husband is faithful to me.

While other wives wonder and worry until new lines creep into their faces, I rest serene in the confidence that my husband is not being led astray by a free-lance in the war of love. Each time that he kisses me, I know that he has touched no other lips; I am certain that there is no woman, however charming, with the power to take him away.

It is not that my husband is unattractive. He has deep, dark eyes and a profile like a statue of Phidias. He is the type that women adore—madly. And yet I rest secure.

Perhaps you will smile and think me a foolish, gullible wife. But my trust is too deep to be upset by mere cynicism. There are things that one knows instinctively, without being told. And I look forward to many more years of serenity.

My husband is faithful to me.

He is in jail.

THE WORM

By Allen Collins

THE Wind and the Rain were discussing their power over women.

"I can blow a woman's skirt on high," boasted the Wind.

"I can make her lift them when she crosses a wet street," boasted the Rain.

A lowly silk worm listened.

"The material I spin, woven into silk stockings, will also make a woman raise her skirts," he said.

AFTER all, the calling of the clergyman is a delight. He has the right to call on all the women in the community without fear. Such a life would indeed be a delight, if one didn't have to be a clergyman to enjoy it.

CONRAD'S APOLOGY FOR EARTH

By Lawrence Vail

CONRAD was unhappy. Everything in his dream was too white.

To him came an angel, curious of his trouble.

"I'm hungry for earth," sobbed Conrad.

The angel beat its wings angrily.

"He's hungry for earth!" he shouted indignantly to a thin, haggard seraph engaged in sucking its lean, serene thumb.

"The new one is hungry for earth!" repeated the seraph.

And the cry, "He is hungry for earth," echoed through the infinite corridors of heaven.

Conrad found himself the centre of a mob of white, glistening angels. They whispered feverishly to one another, flapped at the air, stared at him with excited curiosity.

He dried his eyes, smiled.

"I am evidently creating a sensation," he thought, "on the honest white folk. Perhaps I have misjudged the righteous."

"What have you on earth," inquired a cherub, "to compare with the glories of heaven?"

"There's the earth," said Conrad wistfully, "the earth that is sand, dust, and clay. Nothing holds more strength and sweetness than the rich black earth under grass. Think of the roots in it, nervous and sinewy, striving so fiercely for light. Think of the dead in it, think of the fire, think of the gold. Have you forgotten the flying white earth of the summer? How madly it whirls in the breast of the wind! How gentle its slumber on the lap of green leaves! And the earth of the seashore, ground coral and gold? It trickles through your fingers as softly as the life of a man through the fingers of time. Then there's the earth of the autumn, with red leaves strewn upon it. The earth of the winter mingled with rain. I would rather be a sow and roll in the good healthy mud for my period on earth than linger an hour in this cloud-padded paradise."

"He is right!" sighed an angel. "Here, in these clouds, you may roll over and over for ever and ever and never rub off the white."

"You forget," objected a lean, pedantic-winged creature with spectacles, "the waste and the refuse that cover the earth."

"They are fair," replied Conrad, "the things that cover the earth: the grasses that murmur so wistfully, the bushes that bluster, and the young leaves that rustle in spring. I know of a frail summer flower that holds in the hollow of its trembling heart a blue which one does not find in the wide expanse of the sky, a blue that one seeks in vain in the eyes of the fair-haired girls of the north. I know of another, more yellow and gorgeous than the sun in October, that will remember to die in five days if you bring it home to your room. I know of an indolent rose that bestows so fond a perfume that you are tempted to leave brother and business, even best beloved, and seek a new mistress in Spain. Have you forgotten the plains, green and heavy with grass, white with morning and dew, that roll into valleys, roll over hills, only to die on the brink of the snows? And the rivers that are born in blue glaciers, splash down mighty cliffs, laugh under grey bridges, between lis-

tening trees, on their meandering way to the seas? Yes, they are fair, the things that cover the earth, the waters and forests and weeds. What have you in heaven to cover your virtuous clouds?"

"I grant that the world has a certain primitive loveliness," spoke an angel, "but man has disfigured it with the works of his sordid ambition—cities, and houses, and streets. Every blade of grass is condemned sooner or later to perish."

"Sweeter than the lanes of the forest," said Conrad, "are the streets of the city. Man has made them with his blood, brawn, and thought. They are the fruit of his struggle against pain and weather. To them the great mother of life gives her young. They are born over the alley, on the street they stumble through haphazard life, around the corner they die. Nothing indifferent happens on the streets. I have seen hoops rolling down them, tops spinning up them, pursued by rapturous children with bare, gleaming legs. Over the grey puddles where little birds bathe, ladies of fashion lift their exquisite skirts. On their pavement the vagabond finds the stump of a discarded cigar, the journalists the throes and sensations which will help them purchase their next meal and prolong their lease of existence. Along them the maids go to market, some to buy onions, some to tantalize men. Every sort of war is waged on them: war of knife, war of eyes, war of words. What is not sold on them?—the day's printed chatter, next season's hats, to-night's riot of joy, to-morrow's pain. On the streets men and women vaunt their most precious wares: the rare scents called sin, the true line called race, the commendable corset termed virtue. The work of the day is done on the streets: knives are ground, bricks are laid, good sweat is expended for the right to break honest bread or borrow a woman's red lips. On the streets are sharpened the wits of mankind, ambitions are born, there are tempered the rivets of interest that hold man to man for the space of a year or an hour. Were it not for the streets I should not care to return to the world. Where else could I love and revile the lonely men and women who compose humanity? Where else could I be loved and reviled?"

"You are never contented on earth," wailed a little worn cherub. "Desire rides you from the day of your birth, a brutal tyrant astride your tired flesh. When have you an hour to rest?"

"Yes," said Conrad with rapture, "there is always something to desire on earth. And you have the sad and exquisite knowledge that the fulfilment of a desire will but serve to prepare the land for another. What is the end of hunger but the beginning of thirst? When you cease to feel the sting of desire you might as well say good-bye to yourself and send for the undertaker, for you have nothing more to do in the world. They bloom, the flowers of desire, on all lands and seas, and life would be a sorry routine but for the seeking and picking of them. Among the great mobs of the city, I have found the desire for fern, sky, and solitude. In the silence of the night and the snows in the high, forlorn mountains, I have caught the desire for the lips of a dairymaid, the laugh of a drunkard, the rumble of a single town tram. I remember having seen on the wide Hudson waters, a desire floating like a lily, for the little grey rivers of France. I saw, in the hubbub of lower Broadway, a Neapolitan bootblack nursing on his thin chest a desire for the good wine of Capri. The desire for a girl with gold curls I have plucked from the heart of me while I lingered with my dark-haired beloved. How many desires for wealth, fame, and love have I taken up by the roots! I would hide their stem and blossom away, close to my skin. I found a bitter joy in the pain that they gave me as thorn tore into my flesh. And sometimes, it was only when they had mingled with my blood, that I noticed how far they had wilted. But it is false that you have no desires in heaven. I see the same

thirsty flower growing on every cloud, in truth your white rolling clouds are but wild, drifting fields of them. You have not, however, the courage to touch them; you are always closing your eyes. I do not pluck them, for I do not need them—the flowers of the thirst to desire."

An angel who had not spoken besought him:

"In the world there is pain. We, who have suffered below, still carry the bitter taste on our lips."

"We like to be flattered," said Conrad, "and there is nothing that flatters like pain. We think when we suffer that new senses are born in us, senses more deep and more sensitive. How superior we feel towards the butterfly ladies who flutter from mirror to lover, towards the butterfly gentlemen who live but to capture kisses and coin. We are pleased to stand apart from the world, and philosophize serenely on the fickle tapestry of its poses and moods. But we are never as proud of ourselves as when we descend from our tower and mingle with the sorrowing, struggling folk. We tell ourselves that because we have suffered we belong to the same human family. Is not the poor tramp our brother? The hunger in him is in us. And that girl who hurled all her woe into the river. Is she not our sister? We might have followed her, had we not carefully trained our sense of proportion. We are convinced that it is our pain that has given us understanding of the elemental currents that sway through the crucified masses. Is it strange, then, that we love our pain? And is it not the snobism of pain that discovered or invented the soul?"

"When I was on earth," spoke an angel, "I was strong, brave, and bold. My simple ambition lay clearly ahead of me, a road, straight and white, to the stars. One day, passing through the forest, a girl beckoned to me. I followed her, my high purpose was lost in the maze of her moods. When I succeeded in freeing myself from her, I had lost my ambition, I could no longer find the straight road. Many women came to me in my distress. Some were curious, others were bored. To amuse themselves they pretended to console me. I was a man, a mortal, I pretended to be consoled. Some asked me for ribbons, others for coin, there was one who asked me for children. I was weak; I did not refuse them. Thus I lost my strength, my courage, my boldness; I even lost part of myself. I hear that women have continued playing the same sinister rôle. Throughout the dark ages—and are they not all dark, the ages on earth?—they have robbed man of his purpose and vitality. How can you desire to return to a world where man is hourly ruined by woman?"

"You say they ruin us," smiled Conrad, "and perhaps you are right, but they ruin with such gay charm and poise. Know you daintier engines of havoc than their tremors and fingers and eyes? We men destroy more heavily, we have lumbersome gestures, we lack their style and their touch. Who would not prefer the lanes of the forest, the breath and the arm of us tangled in their breath and arms, to your lonely high road to improbable stars? They may live for the spasm, the moment, but do they not give to that spasm, that moment, the scent of eternity? You say that they tempt us, but do we not continually tempt them to tempt us? And they do their work so gracefully, some with the cold gleam of a shoulder, some with an intricate trick of pupil and lash, some with the rarest prattle of passion. There are some that are clothed sweetly and poorly in cotton and flannel; others that incite and bewilder with batiste and jewels and lace. Some laugh so gaily, others with so wild a remorse. They ask us such splendid absurdities, that give us the flattering conviction that we, too, are absurd and splendid. They ask us to walk out in the rain with them, and reproach us if their flounces are wet. They ask us to leave them or love them for ever, some both to leave them and love them for ever.

They complicate life with such cunning and ceremony. They send us to rob the bank for them, and then tangle our legs in their skirts. But is this not all part of the game of life, love, and hazard? Truly, I see little cause for lament. You mourn that they lose us? Should we not be grateful to them for the trouble, for what is more dismal than to find oneself face to face with oneself? And why grudge them the little we give them? It is not easy for men to be givers. Fundamentally, all men are misers. There is nothing from which they part more regretfully than a sincere emotion. Now and then women are pleased to let us imagine that we have accomplished the impossible. Thus they help us to fall in love with ourselves."

No murmur of approval, no mutter of protest greeted Conrad's words. He looked around him: the white heavens were empty. The wide spaces were dizzy with tottering angels. The white host was falling to earth.

"Lucky I'm dreaming," Conrad heard himself say. "Earth would be too dismal a dwelling-place with all heaven in it."

ROSA MUNDI

By H. J. Gillespie

AND so, once more we meet again, stray pilgrims of a million years,
To learn a little more of love and leave a little less for tears.
Across the warp of mortal time, along the woof of earthly fate,
Our threads are mingled here and there, and here and there are separate;
In following the nameless plan the pattern needs us now and then,
And, as it needs us, we are caught and woven with the world of men.
But as the colours fill the loom, and as the pattern grows complete,
Our threads hang closer, and the way grows wider for our wandering feet.

* * * * *

Was it in Balkh or Babylon, or by some desert Tartar sea
That I first found you? Or did you come first from Khorassan to me?
Sometimes I dream of camel-bells, of curious scents and curious cries—
A caravan's black silhouette against the desert's evening skies.
Did you come out of Ispahan with carpets and with merchandize
Of silks and sandalwood and wine, and girls, with heavy-lidded eyes?
Were you the pleasure of some priest upon Isis-sacred isle,
And did I steal you from his bed and steal with you across the Nile?
Did we find refuge 'mid the dust of some forgotten dynasty,
Or were we slain between the paws of some fantastic deity?
Did I, a Roman governor, exhaust a province for your sake,
Or lose a legion while we drank the wine of love that lovers make?

* * * * *

Forgotten lands, forgotten lives, forgotten everything but this—
That, in the ice-blue dawn of time, you sought and claimed me with a kiss:
A kiss that blossomed to a rose and, falling through the centuries,
Dropped petals that we found again and made our lovers' sanctuaries.

THE LOST MARQUISE

By Marie Beynon Ray

I

THAT day began so sunnily. It was the first day a robin called, and Pierre looked up from his spade with that wise old wink of his which I already knew to contain so much less wisdom than it winked. And I winked back that I had heard it, with an attempt at the innuendo that I had been expecting some such thing all along.

Pierre's garden was very big—too big for seventy bent years and rheumatism; and mine was very little—oh, far too little for an ambition that rose at dawn and had to be carried to bed at night, drugged with sunshine. Pierre made vegetables; flowers were my mother's affair; and my father, of course, looked after the wheat of the world. So for me the earth was neatly blocked out into wheat fields for men, flower-beds for ladies, vegetable gardens for old, weak men, and shapeless patches, well out of danger of annexation, for the indiscriminate but important experiments of small boys.

Suddenly, into the first quiet air I had heard for months (for before this day that came lapping so softly to our senses, there had been only winds and pounding rains), broke a lark's several notes, several times repeated, with, at the end, a delicate shower of laughter.

Then for me a day that had been sunny but colourless, warm but not caressing, broke into a spectrum of many-coloured beauty, and was focussed suddenly in the tiny figure of the Marquise de Saint-Armand, standing in the sunshine at the end of the garden walk.

"It is thy mother," said Pierre, as I leaped and stood quivering like an excitable puppy.

For already, in my eighth year, my mother had begun to be for me what she still is, not so much a mother as a femininity. If all my sentiments for her (and my mother has been twenty years dead) were laid parallel with those of some young lover, fancy for fancy, they would not be so widely different. For it is of her coquetries I dream: of the frocks in which she mocked her graces in the mirror; of the intriguing fans that waved a lover hot and cold, and ran quick to hide a red mockery of a mouth; of the voice that shone like some bright weapon, flashing to the music of her harp. She has spoiled all other women for me; there is not another like her, even in France.

She was, perhaps, not a good mother—not so good as yours—but I know of no mother so loved by her son. She was, I suppose, not really a good wife, but I know of none so adored by her husband. Selfish she surely was, but it was as sweet and cajoling a form of selfishness as I have ever met—a selfishness that delighted to please, and that was as naïvely pleased with attentions as a child. Her whole life was a flirtation, and every man, in one guise or another, a lover—even to Pierre, even to myself; and every man who met her had two sweethearts: his own—and the Marquise de Saint-Armand.

There, at the end of the walk, she stood, as transparently sparkling with happiness as a diamond with light, and waited. Two feet from her I came to a halt in my headlong rush, and grew embarrassed and dug my toe into the gravel, but lost not a gleam of her ra-

diant face; for even then I felt how my scurrying clumsiness amused her and how untouchable was her exquisiteness.

"Well, little son, is that a greeting for a mother six months absent? Not a word?—not a kiss?"

So I came one step nearer and, as I had seen my father do, raised her fingers and kissed them. And she did not laugh, as I in that instant expected, but a soft ripple of love filled her throat.

"Why, he is just a stupid male, like his father," she cried, and stooped and surrounded my grubbiness with all her perfumed charm.

Then, when my head cleared a little, when her curls were out of my eyes (even after she stood up, I had to shake my head a little) and the caress of silk was gone from my cheek, a delirium of happiness snatched my shyness from me. I felt that some sort of reception, however informal, should have been arranged for my mother, and I attempted to supply the deficiencies of the household in my own person. I executed three ill-balanced handsprings in a whirling spray of gravel, and coming to all fours, gave a panting imitation of the half dozen white poodles who always pattered about my mother, and who now stood, all the silly six, with one paw raised as in delicate mockery of my mother's way of holding her hand to be kissed.

My imitation caused such a break of laughter, as of raindrops shaken from a bough, that I was spurred to further efforts. To my exaltation it seemed a credible feat to scale a flying buttress of the old grey château, and I was indeed a third of the way up before I slipped and fell with a horrid thud that brought the tears; but at the sight of my mother's fleeing mirth, I fetched a droll grimace that brought it scampering back.

I bethought me of other and still more astonishing divertissements. I attempted to rival Paris with my charms. It occurred to me that, could I make myself sufficiently fascinating, I might prevent a return to that city of ravishment or, at any rate, achieve an indefinite postponement.

By this time Pierre had groaned his way up the path, and stood shuffling before my mother, his senile mouth loose in a welcoming smile. I was angry that he could think of nothing more amusing to do than twist his cap. He gave the whole place a very foolish air. But then one could really not expect more of an old peasant like Pierre. He could do nothing but dig in his garden, whereas I could not only dig like Pierre, but I could kiss my mother's hand like a fine gentleman, and climb buttresses and execute handsprings, and was, in fact, a creature of infinite resource and charm.

And still more did I think so when, for the first time in my life, I sat down to déjeuner with the Marquise de Saint-Armand, and when, with a soft fall of plumes from her left hand, she spread a fan between her face and the mad little fire on the hearth before which our table was drawn up, and engaged me in a thoroughly grown-up conversation.

My mother always treated me with entire detachment—as though I were no affair of hers, rather a caprice of my own, unobjectionable enough in the upper stories of the house, but hardly, for companionableness, in the same class with her dogs, and only to be asked downstairs in cases of acute boredom—when, for example, my father was gone all day a-hunting. But to-day, there being no worthier foe about, my mother practised her charms upon my eight years of masculinity—to keep an edge upon the sword.

"My dear," she said, "you should have been at the Duchess of Fitz-James' ball." (The thought of the figure I should have cut amused me not less than it did her, but this amusement was the background of our conversation and was not allowed to peep out.) "I wore a gold brocade. Doucet and I together planned it—just the gorgeous fabric and the line," she told me with gestures. "That night it was that the King of Spain remarked that

I was the best dressed woman in Paris; and you may fancy the dog's life I have led with the women ever since. Twice he danced with me—and twice more asked the honour. But I thought it better not, especially—" (here my mother's fan fell across her face so that her brown eyes danced at me above its feathery arch) "especially as Monsieur Gambetta had asked me to dance with no one oftener than with himself, and Monsieur Gambetta is a greater man in France than the kings of all the nations. Fancy, Marquis" (I went hot and cold at this sudden elevation to the peerage), "their great man was as manageable as a kitten. A little fan play, an appointment most faithfully kept—two days late—a handkerchief in shreds at the close of a little chat, and—pouf!—" my mother tossed a heart upon her fan. "Rich appointments, high offices, great honours, thy father could have had—and all for the favour of a little smile or two. But thy father, thy so proud father, would not hear of it," she scoffed. Yet beneath the raillery of her voice was that pride in my father's unassailable integrity that always shone through her mockery of him.

And then, then, for the first time (and oh, with what a crimson shame it flooded me) I remembered my father.

Father!

How had I been led to forget him? Why had he not come?

At my startled question, my mother dropped from the exaltation of her triumphs to a limp discouragement.

"Oh!" she said (and the chill click of her fan dismissed me more effectually than any words), "thy father is still in Paris. There was an affair he had to settle, and so he packed me off home to clear his feet. He will be here in a day—or two at most."

That was all at the time, and it was not until many years later that I learned that the affair for which my father needed so suddenly to clear his feet was a duel with a perfectly ridiculous vicomte who had presumed to take the fan play—or the mislaid appointment—too seriously.

II

But my father did not come in a day—nor in two; and indeed it was quite four weeks before we finally heard that, definitely, he was coming; and then in such a way that, had he sent word that he was never, never at all, coming, he could scarce have produced on my mother a more shocking effect.

That morning, before the news arrived, my mother was as inconsequentially gay as a meadowful of larks. The sound of her rapid voice, bright and piercing as a needle, singing her bergerettes, had brought me tumbling from my tower rooms down to her blue and gold salon where she sat, one silver slipper on a blue velvet cushion, plucking a flutter of notes from her harp.

She swept me a full court curtsey, and turned and turned about in a marvellous new creation of her dear Doucet. With one hand she pulled my curls and with one patted my cheek; then finished me off with the roundest, reddest kiss the tip of my nose had ever received.

"It is enough, little son, enough to drive a man to madness—this simple country dress, just ribbons, and a scarf, and a wicked touch of green where it is least expected? Oh, but a hard man!—one seasoned in the courts of Austria and of Italy, used to the melting eyes of Sicily and the little sugar ways of Spain? And this man, straight from Paris, brings a message from thy father, who must soon follow after, little son. The great man sent his servant to announce all this to simple us—and such a lackey for gold braid and brass buttons I have never seen. Does he think we are country gentlefolk to be awed by this pomp? Well, well, Marquis, we shall have to make the most of the few little tricks we have picked up in Paris."

And when next I saw my mother all

this gaiety had been dashed from her as a raised glass from the lips.

The Comte de Beauharnais brought letters and messages from my father. The duel had been delayed; the young vicomte had been taken suddenly ill and his family, learning of the proposed meeting, had rushed him off to their country villa; but the young man, feeling himself dishonoured by this seeming retreat, had risen from his sick-bed and hastened back to Paris, where, arriving on a night when my father was attending a party at the house of Madame de la Pagerie, he had, uninvited, entered the house and renewed the challenge, thus adding scandal to gossip; for now everyone began to whisper that it was for the sake of this Madame de la Pagerie that they were to fight.

The Comte de Beauharnais, at this point in his story, assured my mother that this, of course, was only the idle prattle of outsiders; that those who stood close to my father knew the absurdity of the rumour. Having assured her of this so earnestly that grave doubts and suspicions began to trouble her, the Comte began most solicitously to reassure her, to such good purpose that by the time he departed my little mother was in an agony of jealousy, and indeed began to doubt that she was the cause of the original challenge. My father's letters, speaking most frankly of his friendship with Madame de la Pagerie and regretting the irksomeness of his delay in Paris (due to the fever the young vicomte had contracted on leaving his sick-bed), only put the spur to her jealousy; for, argued my mother, there is no one like an honest man, with all his honest ways, to deceive one.

How ridiculous was all this tossing passion I cannot but believe my mother herself must sometimes have suspected; for of all men in the world my father was the least likely to prove false to love, and utterly incapable of deception. But I knew it is every woman's belief that no man is above suspicion nor without reproach. With that bedfellow a woman may lie awake any night and suffer; and I suppose, on the whole, it is just as well that women do not live in abounding faith.

So my mother locked herself in with her jealousy and let it rend her. Never, in a house that she always filled with a carillon of song and laughter, had I known anything like the palled silence of the succeeding days. Two or three petty rages so terrified men and maids that service came to us on tiptoe and surrounded us with whispers. So for almost a week.

Then one morning came a little stir as though a death had been removed from the house or a new life come into it. At the sound of doors opening and closing, of the yelps of petted dogs, above all, of my mother's clear voice breaking into a laugh at the sparkling top of its crescendo, I dared to creep, step by step, down the winding stairway from my tower.

I had reached the very last stair, when we suddenly caught sight of each other, my mother and I, and, "Well," said my mother in a voice sharpened to a biting edge, "is there no one to look after the child?"

I needed no assisting hands to drag me back to my obscurity. That was the one occasion in my life when my mother rudely ceased to be my equal, and became an insulting parent.

That afternoon the Marquise de Saint-Armand emerged from a whirlpool of bandboxes and tissue-paper in a toilette that took the breath, and departed, coachman before and footman behind, in the coach of the Comte de Beauharnais, for a tour of the countryside; and the next afternoon they set out again, this time in my mother's *calèche*, the diminutiveness of which seemed to establish a much more intimate and satisfactory relation between them; and from then on it was the *calèche* they used for all their excursions.

The Comte was most curious about the country, for it seemed he had recently come into an estate adjoining ours; the heirs were bitterly disputing

his rights in the courts, but meantime the Comte held down the nine possessive points of the law and seemed perfectly content that the other claimants should bicker as much as they chose over the remaining point.

Young as I was, I recognized the Comte as a crushingly fine gentleman; and he was so handsome, so friendly, so gay, above all, so obviously pleased with my mother that, much as I always resented any man but my father having the happiness to sit beside her and receive her smiles and gestures, I could not help but like him. Though he certainly wished to be liked in that house, he made not one effort more than if he had cared not at all.

He had the gift of gaiety, for which the French would forgive the devil his deviltry; and his gaiety so chimed with my mother's, and so charmed the servants, and so intoxicated me (whom, in the occasional moments I was with him, he treated as a thoroughly companionable equal, decidedly worth consulting on the points of a dog or the comparative pleasures of fox and deer hunting), that he entered the house on smiles and departed on curtsies. Then his carriage would roll away, out through the wheat land and hunting land that lapped up, wave after wave, to the feet of the purple Pyrenees; and not one doubt or one fear followed him.

III

MEANTIME my father sent word of further and further delays but explained, so that my mother should not think him too desolate, that Paris was really wonderfully itself, that he was meeting many old acquaintances, up for the spring season, that the house of Madame de la Pagerie was a veritable home for him, and Madame de la Pagerie herself an altogether charming and lovable woman. And that, in short, it was too, too bad that the Marquis de Saint-Armand, who cared so little for Paris whether it was itself or something quite different, should be shackled there, while the Marquise de Saint-Armand, whom it ravished, was mewed up in an old prison of a château in Ariège.

And with every letter she received my mother struck a higher, clearer note of gaiety, and went for longer, later drives with the Comte, and returned more and more illuminated, walking on adoration.

One morning, at false dawn, when the earth sighs softly before awaking and every drooping leaf turns over in the first chill breath of day, when the birds quicken a moment in their nests and utter a few drowsy notes, when even man, in his deep sleep, senses a change in nature and stirs uneasily in his bed, I woke suddenly, with a little questioning sigh, and then, with a dream of crows circling about enchanted towers tumbling about my ears, sat upright—listening.

First the sound of a long, heavy stride—my father's surely; then the scurry of a suddenly roused household—opening doors, exclamations, whispers—rising rapidly to a climax of alarm.

At a maid's scream I broke into a wail of terror and my nurse, running to me, was too hysterical to quiet me—a young nurse, angular and uncomforting, not my dear old Nanette.

Yes, my father had come home unexpectedly. To be sure he was with my mother and she was quite all right. Well, at any rate, they would find her soon. She had not been in her bed that night. Everything in her room was as her maid had left it (for she had told her not to wait up for her)—her bed turned down as she liked it, her light still burning, her little slippers and her peignoir waiting for her. No, my father was not at all worried. He knew just where my mother was, and I was not to be frightened but to lie down and go to sleep and when I woke my mother would be home again.

But at the first word a little trembling fear crept into my heart and dilated till it filled my soul.

A terrible new word began to define itself in my mind—*death!* It beat its

meaning into my understanding by means of another word I knew better —*never!*

Never, never, never, would I see my mother again—never, never, never. And the word grew more final and limitless with its every repetition till my childish mind had grasped all it could of the meaning of eternity—an eternity of never, never, never seeing my mother. She had died—as my old Nanette had died—just disappeared one night and I had never, never seen her again. That was death. Oh, they did not tell me that because they did not want me to cry, but I knew, and my father knew, and he would tell me; and, "Father, father," I cried, but there was no answer, for my father was out with his men and with lanterns, back and forth from house to garden, though what to look for, whether a body or footsteps, wheel marks or a wandering figure, no one could faintly guess.

Simply my mother was nowhere in the house and none of the servants knew anything of her sudden disappearance. Last evening the Comte had called and they had sat chatting a while. My mother had sung to him her "*Non, je n'irai plus au bois*" and "*Maman, dites-moi ce qu'on sent quand on aime.*" They had laughed much, oh, but very much, over some idea of the Comte's and then, quite early, he had called for his carriage and departed.

For some time my mother had sat reading in the salon and had told the servant he should go to bed and leave her alone—ah, indeed, she was not afraid. And when my father had returned in the little hours of the night, the light in the salon was out and her book where she had thrown it on the chaise longue—but the big château was empty of her.

What doubts, what explanations, what fearful imaginings filled my father's thoughts during those hours of futile search, I have often tried to conceive. The dreadful thing was that there was no clue to go on, no reason for, no possible explanation of this disappearance. Everything was as it had been a few hours before when she had been so vitally present. There was no evidence of a premeditated departure—no luggage gone, no signs of packing. That harm should have befallen her seemed absurd; robbery, violence, crime were unthinkable in that pastoral land of ours.

I was told afterwards that when he had sent his men to search grounds and forest, my father returned to the house and went up into my mother's room and sat there quietly as if waiting for her to come in.

He looked as calm as though she had just stepped into the next room to fetch a book or a sheet of new music to sing to him. He sat in the window as that fresh green day opened on the world with its sweet bird pipings and its damp fluttering breath lifting leaves and flower heads only to let them languidly fall—sat with clasped hands and raised his head with a slight smile whenever the door was opened. Surely he expected her.

As he sat listening to all the distant sounds in the house, he often seemed to hear the rustle of her dress, her quick footfall, her light voice. Surely the next moment will bring her laugh, her hand on the knob—for she is somewhere in the house without doubt.

Then suddenly there is a quick step —but not hers; a hurried voice—not hers; a maid who runs to him.

She has looked again through the wardrobe of Madame la Marquise and Madame's velvet riding habit is missing.

A sharp knocking at the door and Jean, the coachman, is here. Madame's riding horse is gone from the stable—saddled.

Then my father sits waiting no longer. Quick! Boots, whip, spur, and to horse! Two men to go with him and five in other directions. Not a moment to lose. Mount and off!

And then, when the men had scattered and only my father remained, giving a last sharp order, high and clear came a flutter of laughter, scat-

tered like foam in a breeze. The spangled forest lay before us—bombs of gold sunlight bursting in a mesh of green leaves. Almost before we knew which way to look, a horse, two horses, came galloping toward the edge of the woods, and there, through the green forest light, rode the Marquise de Saint-Armand and the Comte de Beauharnais.

As they came dashing through the patched and tossing greens of the woods, she raised her hand to her hat, knocked it off with her crop, and brought all her loosened hair about her shoulders. I thought that at that moment she saw us there on the terrace, my father already out of his saddle; for it seemed to me a lightning alarm flashed over her face, and she wheeled her horse suddenly to face the oncoming Comte. Then with a pretty, impudent gesture, she reached down, slipped the garter from her leg, and with a light laugh snapped it about her shaken curls.

Laughing, they rode toward us, and as they came into the broad belt of sunshine that lay across their path, the Comte lifted his eyes from my mother's radiance and saw my father.

IV

WHAT passed in the mind and heart of the Comte de Beauharnais at that moment I have never known. I fancy that there was much of his joyous career that he would willingly have sacrificed not to have come to that moment in his life. But by his manner as he came down the driveway, reining a horse that danced on the morning air, he might have been returning with my mother from a ten-minute canter around the garden.

My mother, when she saw us—perhaps for the first time, I think for the second—waved her crop gaily but came not a pace faster, and turned her head to talk to the Comte and smile up at him. Her colour was whipped to a sharp pink, in her eyes were bubbling wells of merriment, and on her lips, red laughter. My father stood with one hand stroking his horse's neck and waited.

What each of those three people felt as they drew slowly together, approaching inevitably that climax in their lives, with no more power to arrest it or delay it than encountering thunder clouds, I can now only imagine, and then, of course, I had no understanding of the situation beyond the fact that after my night of loss, my mother was returning in sunlight, unharmed and happy, to our embraces.

As I stood on the flagged walk with my hand in Pierre's, I seemed to be waiting through all the time there was for them to arrive. Finally, at the end, they broke into a little canter and came to a halt with a flourish at the steps of the porte-cochère.

Before the Comte could dismount to hold her stirrup, my father was at my mother's side.

With one hand he held her horse, and with the other, as though she had been his sovereign at the levée, he raised her fingers and kissed them.

At that my mother went white as sunlight. Her whole body, as she dismounted, moved stiffly as a puppet's. Without a word, without a glance at the Comte, noticing me no more than if I were the gardener's child, she turned and walked into the house.

My father and the Comte stood encountered. The Comte removed his hat and, all unconsciously, as though in the presence of one of those sacraments which men thus honour, stood with it in his hand.

"Monsieur," he said, "command me. My honour is in your hands."

"Monsieur le Comte," said my father, "the affair is ended," and bowed.

At a glove flung in his face the Comte could not have turned more instantly pale. A moment he stood taut, then took a step toward my father and held out his hand.

"Will you do me the honour, Monsieur?" he said.

But my father only bowed again,

turned sharply, and passed into the house.

The Comte de Beauharnais remained a moment with his refused hand still outstretched; then very slowly, as one urged to action from deep sleep, he mounted and rode away under the flecked green and yellow lights of the driveway; and for as long as he was in sight, his head was bowed and his horse did not move out of a walk.

I have partly heard, but for the most part guessed, the scene that passed between my mother and my father.

When he went to her in her room, she stood before him with tortured, twisting hands, for all bravado had dropped from her at that simple gesture of his. The intrigue she had prepared to revenge herself, the imposing structure of outraged love and wounded pride she had erected about herself, had fallen in sorry débris about her, leaving her piteously unprotected. Then my father went to her and took her in his arms.

I think he looked over the brink of her eyes deep into her heart and saw down even to that vague impulse that desired his constancy to waver that her charm might win him back.

But it needed not this searching to give him the surety of her innocence. That was as crystal to him as light upon running water. Her jealousy would have obscured even that to revenge itself, but through the little subterfuges she invented for his confusion, through even the impudence of the garter episode, my father saw as though in rare atmosphere.

And as for Madame de la Pagerie, no doubts, no fears could stand for one moment in the clear white light of my father's honesty and loyalty. So that evening the little Marquise de Saint-Armand, very tender and a little wistful after the storm that had ravaged her, walked with my father among the failing lights of the garden, where blue and violet scarfs of mist, detaching themselves from the purple Pyrenees, floated in upon us. Across the dying day came a breeze gifted with damp odours from the woods stirring the drooping flowers on their stems. Suddenly out trilled a laugh, breaking in spray at the crest, and from my castles and towers, built of the broken stones and bits of brick of a new pathway, I looked up to see the Marquise de Saint-Armand, half of two red lips mocking my father above a filmy scarf and half of two brown eyes enticing him from beneath dropped lashes, raise her fan, an inadequate bit of frozen lace, between his lips and a red and promised kiss.

And I laughed, and they laughed back, and we all understood that our old sweet life together had renewed itself with the quickening spring.

THERE is one job never finished. No matter how much of a fool a woman makes out of a man, there is always another woman able to come along and carry on the good work.

THE trouble is not with the idols men worship, but with the altars upon which they are placed and the temples in which they are enshrined.

THE FACE IS UNFAMILIAR

By Oscar Lewis

THE papers, naturally, had not been silent. It was the sort of news that in the journalistic sense cannot be over plentiful, and the fact that young Coyle was an upstate Coyle certainly detracted nothing from the interest of the story.

The girl, on the other hand, was mentioned in a rather incidental fashion. She had given her name as Virgie Rund, her age as nineteen, and Pexie's, the candy store near the west gate of the campus, as her place of employment. She was referred to as attractive.

These statements, including the latter, were subsequently checked up by a reporter and found to be correct. Which was to his mild disappointment, for he had been following a tip that promised to lead to the door of one of the largest houses on Sorority Row. Which merely indicates that he was a good reporter and valuable to his paper.

He found Virgie Rund at a boarding house on Bancroft Way. Far from being appalled at the notoriety, the girl seemed rather to enjoy it. Nevertheless, she was tearful in a dutiful fashion as he extracted her version of the story.

Young Coyle had called for her at Pexie's on the previous evening, at ten o'clock when she went off duty. It was a warm night, with a moon. They had driven south, just ambled along, and had reached Chabot Inn out in the hills, she thought, about twelve. Something had gone wrong with the car there; Coyle had worked, unsuccessfully, for fifteen minutes trying to get it started. As to the fire, it had started in the lobby downstairs and had burned so quickly that by the time it was discovered the inn was already as good as gone. The other guests had managed to get out, but the whole stairway was a mass of flames when they reached it. Coyle had lowered her down finally through a window, and then had jumped. That is how he had broken his ankles. This was absolutely the true version of the affair, whereas the papers, every one of them, had twisted the facts around in some way or another.

She had managed to become quite tearful by the time she finished.

The reporter shook his head in unprofessional sympathy and studied the picture before him upon the table in the front room of the boarding-house. It was an enlarged snapshot of the girl, showing her looking out from beneath the limp brim of a wide, summery hat. He was sympathetic and truly sorry for Virgie Rund who was crying so conscientiously. But he was also a reporter and an excellent one, and before he left he had managed to slip the photograph into his pocket.

It was not until she saw the evening paper that Virgie Rund missed her picture. She was glad then that he had not stolen the less attractive one which stood on the piano.

II

AT the end of three years, Hoyt Coyle's ankles still caused him considerable trouble. Medical authorities, to whom he had many times exposed them, wriggling his bare feet under their direction (first up and down and then to the east and west) had shaken their learned heads, and Coyle himself finally had come to doubt if he ever again

would have really strong, dependable ankles.

This seemed at first a very real handicap, but as such misfortunes sometimes do, it served to open larger opportunities to him in another direction. At golf, as at dancing, he was poor and uncertain, and tennis, of course, was out of the question. It was, therefore, one might say, almost in self-defence that he had taken to polo. Yet it is true that on the day they beat Claremont, for the first time in memory, Hoyt Coyle was captain and the particular star of the Los Altos team.

This—to a man who two years before had never sat on a polo pony—was a very creditable achievement, and Coyle felt a satisfaction that despite his treacherous ankles he could no longer be classed as an athletic nonentity. Under the buoyancy of it, he contrived that night to lead Alys Connyers, a beautiful and charming girl, and an old acquaintance, to a bench beneath the hedge at the west end of the clubhouse, and to propose an alliance of matrimony.

Alys Connyers, who had been gay all evening, grew quiet as he spoke. When he had finished she allowed his hands to remain where he had placed them, over her own, and gazed ahead into the darkness of the garden.

Coyle regarded her profile, which was very clear cut even in the semi-darkness, and as she continued silent, he raised one of her hands as a tentative measure to his lips.

But he could not understand her hesitation. His proposal, he knew, could hardly be a surprise to her. There was a tiny frown upon her forehead above her nose and Coyle reached across and blotted it out with a forefinger.

"Don't puzzle yourself for a way to let me down easy, Alys," he said. "Save the honeyed words for the next one. Brutal frankness is your cue with me."

"I may take you at your word, Hoyt," she said, returning his gaze a trifle uncertainly. "Shall I tell you just why I am hesitating?"

"Just why," he encouraged. "And preferably, for the sake of custom and usage, in words of one syllable."

"Here they are, Hoyt. Two words, and both short—Virgie Rund."

"Virgie Rund?" repeated Coyle, puzzled for just a second.

Then he released her hands and sat up straight upon the bench.

She stole a glance toward him and in the semi-darkness placed a hand upon his shoulder.

"I'm not refusing you definitely, Hoyt," said she, in a lower voice. "I think that I am ready to be—sensible. To make—what do they call it?—allowances. I'm sure I can be sensible. And it was more than three years ago. You'll wonder then why I am bringing it up at all."

Hoyt Coyle was wondering, very much.

"Perhaps you wouldn't understand if I told you, but I must know about Virgie Rund. Tell me about her; tell me all about her. Was she pretty?"

Coyle laughed with somewhat forced gaiety. "I thought so then; I was a junior."

"Brunette — dark eyes?" Alys Connyers might have been describing herself.

"No—blue," confessed Coyle, "and blonde. But why— Perhaps, Alys, we'd better go in!"

"Tell me about her," repeated the girl.

She leaned forward and looked into his face. There was a gravity and a real sincerity about her. Moreover, she was more than usually pretty, he thought, that night. "Do tell me about her."

"Well," said Coyle, uncomfortably, "she was a blonde and she worked in a candy store—you know that. She had no brains, and not much education to cover the lack. But she had attractions and knew how to use them cleverly. Flirtations were a game with her; they were her entertainment and excitement, like poker to a gambler. And like a

gambler she could be depended on to play her cards well. I took her for a ride one night after she had got through work. And then the next night we went again, and often after that."

"Did she go out with anyone else?"

"No one else, I think, just at that time."

"Did she like you very much?"

"I don't know, Alys. She liked excitement and she liked to be admired. She knew she could attract chaps; get them to make fools of themselves. She liked that."

"I want you to tell me, Hoyt—had there been anyone before you?"

"Anyone? Good Heavens! That was the girl's recreation. She was a confirmed, unregenerate flirt. She—"

"Without doubt she was, Hoyt," said Alys Connyers. "But I'm thinking now of Chabot Inn."

"Oh, I say, Alys! Let's drop this business!"

"I must be sure, Hoyt; I must know for certain. I can make allowances, but I must know if there were others before you. That—"

"Good Lord!" said Coyle. "Alys, this sounds indecent. Great Scott! Let's go inside."

He was on his feet. She rose and stood beside him.

"You will wait, Hoyt, a week for your answer?"

"I—yes, of course, Alys. Let's go in."

They went inside and danced.

There were times during the next twenty-four hours when Alys wondered at her hesitation. Hoyt Coyle was in all ways eligible, and he attracted her strongly. Her inclinations were to look broadly and tolerantly upon the incident of Virgie Rund. Any harboured resentment would have seemed to her an outcropping of a secret feeling of jealousy, and she had no secret feeling of jealousy. Coyle, moreover, attracted her keenly, each thought of marriage to him brought her senses a stimulating little shock of pleasure.

Yet she hesitated and was holding her answer in reserve because of Virgie Rund, toward whom she was conscious of no personal feeling whatever.

Her interest in the girl was entirely the extended reflection of her interest in Coyle. She might have explained her attitude toward Virgie Rund by likening her to a woman who had been hurled from the top of a building, though she thought that was a rather unnecessarily violent comparison. Down in the street below, passers by walked over her as she lay. Coyle, perhaps, was one of these, which was regrettable, but to a person of tolerance, no proof of his total depravity.

On the other hand, he may have been the one on the roof who had tossed her over the side. To the eye of Alys Connyers, this seemed a different thing. She could not quite widen her sense of tolerance to encompass that.

But it was here that the real difficulty lay; she must know the precise part that Coyle had played in Virgie Rund's figurative descent from the high spot. Coyle himself had proved an unsatisfactory witness.

She smiled now as she recalled his panic when the intent of her questions on the previous evening had grown clear to him. Even were an answer extorted from him, she knew by an instinct that she could not rely upon its truthfulness.

There remained, of course, the girl, but the difficulty with her was similar. She might prove difficult and unresponsive under the most tactful cross-examination. And no doubt, if it suited her whim, she would be untruthful as well. There was something about the situation to tempt even the habitually truthful to lie, merely for the sake of lying. The words of neither would be trustworthy; Alys Connyers felt that by unerring instinct.

But, she wondered, was there need for actual words? There was the police strategy of confronting the suspect with sudden evidence of the crime and thereby surprising a confession. She knew that she would need no formal

statement. If she could contrive that the two meet and could observe the girl's face as Hoyt Coyle stood before her, there would be no need, for her purpose, of a verbal confirmation or denial.

Alys Connyers was distinctly proud of her plan. The psychological truth of it made failure impossible. Confronting Coyle unexpectedly, Virgie Rund's face would be an infallible register, pronouncing his guilt or innocence of the major crime with the distinctness of a jury foreman.

Alys Connyers, being a woman, knew this. Only a woman, she thought, could have devised the plan; could have been so certain of its infallibility.

III

THE following day she went to Barwick, hoping that in the college town she might get some clue as to the present whereabouts of Virgie Rund. Her success was immediate and complete. The girl still lived there, in the same boarding-house. She still held forth at Pexie's.

The youth from whom she acquired this information regarded her with an expression of pleasure and of entire approval.

"Always glad to do anything for a friend of Virgie's. You might mention if you will that Pape Orchard directed you down. She knows me—now and then she does, that is. When it suits her whim. A remarkable girl, Virgie; a charming girl—but erratic. And with an eye, I regret to say, for the main chance.

"Now if you are staying in town," he added, in a more flattering tone, "you mustn't let Virgie be selfish and keep you all to herself."

She returned his smile and expressed a polite hope that such would not be the case.

As Alys continued on she began to grow more confident of her errand. She had entertained some logical fears that there might be difficulty in inducing Virgie Rund to return with her to Los Altos. This volunteered information made it seem to her less difficult. She must, of course, tell the girl nothing; the entire success of her plan depended upon that. What was required now merely was to gain her acquaintance; the rest, she felt, would develop. There was the crew race with Stamfield over the Los Altos course on Saturday, which would afford her ample reason for an impulsive invitation.

The plan was a greater success even than she had hoped.

It was five o'clock when Alys Connyers entered the door at Pexie's, and at seven-ten the girl sat beside her upon the car seat, travelling back with her to Los Altos. Virgie Rund remarked to her new acquaintance that she got a regular kick out of doing things like that, suddenly.

Alys Connyers, elated by her success, leaned back and studied the girl at her side. She was forced to pay her a real tribute, for Virgie Rund was excellent. She was blonde, and certainly not unattractive; a disciple of what Alys had once heard called the "you-big-strong-man-protect-me" school. She was consciously and painstakingly the clinging feminine; a modest, demure show-window, her charms, artfully enhanced, on display. Alys felt a curious new interest in the test she had prepared.

She closed her eyes and pictured again the scene as she had planned it; went again over each minutest detail, and when she had finished admitted herself satisfied. Her plan was correct in its fundamentals, and therefore was universal in its application, which sounded to her like good logic. Virgie Rund was a human being and a woman, that was uncontroversial. She cast aside as an impossibility all thought of failure.

IV

THE next afternoon the test was made. A telephone call brought Coyle to the house at two-thirty. On his arrival he was directed to the pagoda at

the lower end of the garden; all precisely as she had planned.

When she heard his footsteps upon the gravel path, Alys excused herself from Virgie Rund and disappeared along a continuation of the path, which led towards the rear of the house.

She advanced twenty feet; then, when she was well out of sight, she turned quickly and reapproached behind the protecting shrubbery. When Coyle entered the cleared space and confronted Virgie Rund, Alys Connyers was standing secreted less than a half dozen feet distant.

She was very calm and observant, and conscious only of a regret that Virgie Rund was a blonde. A brunette might be depended upon to faint in an orderly fashion; blondes, she felt, were variable and prone to hysterics.

Coyle had advanced to within a few feet of her when Virgie Rund looked up. Alys Connyers, whose eyes were upon the girl's face, was conscious without looking about that Coyle had come to a sudden stop. She was standing near enough to hear him draw his breath; a quick astonished inhalation. Alys kept her gaze upon the girl's face. She missed no shade of its expression. Less than half a dozen feet separated the two when Virgie Rund looked up, her eyes looking full into Coyle's face.

She regarded him for a few seconds with a casual, tranquil interest.

"Won't you sit down?" said she, politely. "Miss Connyers will be back in a minute."

V

It was perfectly obvious that she did not know him from Adam!

There came a series of gasps from behind the shrubbery; then a loud peal of laughter, shrill and off-key.

Alys Connyers had become hysterical.

ON THE HILL-PATH: EVENING

By Odell Shepard

NOW there will be roses, roses to remember,
And a bright cloud fading in the sky;
And I shall hear the little waves plashing in the twilight
Beside her high-walled garden, till I die.

It may be this is better—to have my road before me
And the steady grind of gravel under heel,
To face the rancour of the wind and see the shadows gather
And the great blue planets burn and wheel.

Now the circle of the hills is my high-walled garden
And the whistling wind will be my evening song,
And the branches of the pine waft a sweeter scent than roses
In the land where I belong.

But always I'll be haunted by a ghost of faded colour
And the sound of water lisping on the shore;
Always there'll be roses, roses to remember,
And a voice, and a softly closing door.

EVEN AS YOU AND I

By T. F. Mitchell

HE tried on overcoat after overcoat, but none suited him. Some were too gaudy in hue, some too extreme, some did not fit properly. He despaired of being suited. At length he picked up one and put it on. To his surprise he found that it fitted perfectly. Moreover it was of a sober shade and conservative cut.

"I'll take this one," he said.

"Beg pardon, sir," said the clerk, "but that's the one you had on when you came in."

WHY SHOULD I DREAM?

By Harold Crawford Stearns

I THOUGHT that love would come with bright
And dazzling colours of the day. . . .
Why should I dream that love, like a starry night,
Is grey?

I thought that love would come to me
With crash of drums and songs to thrill. . . .
I did not realize that love can be
So still.

A MAN is always thinking about a woman, a woman about a man. In the case of the man it is recollection. In the case of the woman, anticipation.

BIGAMY: An unfortunate way of surmounting a dilemma.

THE DANCE-HALL AT UNIGENITUS

By Vincent O'Sullivan

I

THE steamer in which I took passage for England from New York, in the middle of July, 1916, was slow and many years old, and not very big. She carried about as many passengers as she could hold. A great number of these were Englishmen, or at least British subjects, who had come to realize in their far colonies that their country wanted all the men she could get. There were also some French and Belgians, and a fair number of Americans.

A medley of costumes could be seen on deck in the daytime. The picturesque garb of planters and cowboys mingled with the Army and Navy uniforms of different nations and the costumes of the nurses and other Red Cross workers. There were also a few men in mufti who were going to the war countries on one purpose or another.

I had a small inside cabin. The only advantage of it was that I had it to myself. Most of the cabins carried two or three or even four passengers. The heat was terrible when we left New York, and it grew worse as the ship took her slow and anxious way on a southerly course. My little cabin was intolerably stuffy: I had to leave the door wide open all night to catch what air was moving in the stifling darkened ship with all the ports closed.

This being the case, it was unfortunate for me that the cabin just opposite, which opened like mine on a narrow gangway running off the main gangway, was occupied by a particularly noisy pair. At least, one of them was noisy. The first morning out I was awakened about five o'clock by a man shouting at the top of his voice in what I took at first to be London Cockney. It turned out to be the "wailer" accent of Australia.

"What are you layin' there for? Why don't you get up? You don't seem to know there's a war on. All *you* think about is your own bloomin' hide! Who are you anyway? You're nobody. You're only a rotten kid."

The other mumbled something I could not catch.

"That's it," spluttered the Australian. "There you go! Wakin' everybody up. What right have *you* got to 'ave an opinion on anything? D'ye hear me? On *anything*. You're only a rotten kid."

"I know it," replied quite a well-bred English voice.

I wondered to hear him take the other man's insults so meekly; I supposed that whatever difference in class their voices denoted, they must be very intimate. I found later that they had never seen each other till they met in the uneasy cabin where fate had thrown them together for the voyage.

"Has your razor got a decent blade?" asked the cultivated voice.

"You won't get *my* razor, my boy. You're too lazy to strop your own. My word, I'll teach you somethin' before this voyage is over. God bli'me, I'll make you sit up, see if I don't."

And the Australian went off singing loud (about five in the morning, mind you)—

"It's the wrong wrong way to tickle Mary,
It's the wrong way, you know."

That Australian was really too bad. Every night, when at last between twelve and one I gathered enough resolution to descend from the breathless deck into the choking hull, there he would be in his bunk sweating and snoring. And just as I was dropping asleep, he would be getting up for the day, and the tirades against his roommate would begin. He was a pursy, red-faced little man, and carried in the daytime a uniform which I could not identify. He belonged to some vague military corps or fire-brigade in Australia.

I was at a stand before the roommate's patience and long-suffering. There was something baffling, and at last, for me, a dull irritation in such lassitude. He did not even take refuge in the irony which is often your Englishman's way with a man he has too much contempt for to fight.

Now and then when the Australian, after being particularly trying, decided to go on deck, I could hear the other mutter: "Blighter!" under his breath. That was all.

I began to observe him with some curiosity. He was a tall young man who did not look as if he had yet taken his final shape—as if he was "set," as the phrase is. I took him to be about twenty, but when I came to know him he told me he was twenty-six.

He was not at all spruce; he always looked as if he had tumbled out of bed and had neglected to wash, though as a matter of fact he spent a long time every day in the bathroom. It was one of the complaints of the Australian who accused him of monopolizing the bath. His skin had that kind of paleness or muddiness which no exercise or sharp air can colour; he always went about bareheaded, and his shock of hair was never properly brushed. He wore a blue cricket blazer with the arms of some Cambridge college embroidered on the pocket. The sleeves of this were too short, and from them hung his big clumsy hands and wrists. His white trousers were also too short and showed tan socks covering thick ankles and huge feet.

For all that, he looked as if he might be good at games; if you saw him lounging down from some pavilion to bat at cricket you would have confidence in his prowess. A certain number of youths just like him may be seen any normal year at Oxford or Cambridge, and somehow or other they always suggest that their career there will end in a scrape—they will get entangled in some network which will trip them up, not out of any viciousness, but through mere slackness and want of prudence.

And in fact Barrage—Arthur Barrage his name was—did let me know that his career at King's College, Cambridge, had come to an undesirable end not very long after he had gone there from one of the big schools—Repton, I think.

At lunch time the third day out, our doors being wide open, he had called over from his cabin to mine some new instructions which had just been posted about life-belts. We had then strolled down together to the saloon, and after lunch again we had some desultory talk. I happened to know the part of Somerset—the Quantock neighbourhood—he came from, and this made the basis of such talk as we had, which was very little. He had got attached to a party, two British officers and a nurse, who played bridge most of the time. The little Irish nurse, who was good-looking, used to bully him dreadfully.

"Of course, if you don't *want* to play . . ."

"I *do* want to play," Barrage would answer in his abstracted way.

"Well, why can't you come in time then?"

And he did seem to want to play and to be around with them—a somewhat rowdy lot they were—though he gave the impression of a superfluous unhappy hanger-on clinging to the skirts and coat-tails of people who would not miss him much if he dropped off.

I began to think he was in love with the nurse; he forced himself so

obviously and persistently on her when she was talking to some other man. She showed him, too, some attention which might at a push be taken for a version of tenderness: finding him untidy, she often set him to rights, pulled up his coat-collar, tied his tie, grumbling, to be sure, all the time she was doing it, calling him "a clumsy brute."

II

THE voyage got more and more dismal and uncomfortable. The heat day and night was crushing. In the evening, after dinner, the only alternatives were to sit in an overcrowded and sweltering saloon watching people playing cards, if not with wonderful industry, despite the untoward circumstances, filling in diaries (the diarists were Americans), or to grope about on a pitch dark and slippery deck, littered with gear, where a hot rain was always drizzling.

One night, having stood the saloon as long as I could, I went below about half-past nine to fetch a raincoat from my cabin. When I turned on the electric light it threw a light into the opposite cabin which was unlighted and with the door wide open. Then I saw Barrage.

He was kneeling on the floor by the side of his bunk; his face was pressed down into the bedclothes, and his arms were stretched out above his head. I had made some noise as I entered my room, but the kneeling man never stirred.

It would be hard to express the astonishment with which I watched him there; he seemed so utterly lonely—so young a man withdrawn from all the other passengers in such an attitude of desolation. My first impulse was to speak to him: then I thought that as he had evidently not heard me it might make him uncomfortable to think he had been seen.

Out on the deck explanations came crowding to me.

Perhaps he took drugs; perhaps he was in love with the Irish nurse and sick with jealousy—I had left her playing cards quite happily with two men in the flying corps and another man, a British officer, who was always about with her. Yes, that must be it: calf-love and jealousy. Unless, of course, what that Australian was always girding at him should be true. He was always accusing Barrage of being in a blue funk about submarines. Darker thoughts came to me. Perhaps he had committed some crime out in those lands where he had been. . . .

III

THE next day was Sunday. While most of the ship was getting ready for the Church service, I sat on deck in the rain watching the green sullen ocean. Just as the bugle sounded to call the people to church, Barrage came along the deck holding a rug and a pillow which he spread over the chair next to mine and then flopped into it.

We exchanged some casual words. He interested me a little now; I observed him with some curiosity and was readier to talk with him than I had been hitherto. We spoke of the long and tedious voyage, and I said that no doubt he was anxious to get home to England.

He was lighting his pipe.

"No, I'm not particularly anxious." He gave a short laugh. "It's the other way."

"Well, there can be only one reason for that. Or rather two reasons. Either you have left something behind you are sorry to part from, or you don't believe in the war."

"Oh, the war!" said Barrage. "I never give it a thought. That is, I think it's the best thing for me."

He paused a moment. "I shan't much mind if I don't come alive out of the war."

What could I say? I was not seeking his confidences—in fact, as they promised to be unpleasant, seeing the condition I had found him in last night, I did not want them. But this remark of his was an obvious bid for a sympa-

thetic listener. You can always tell when people want to tell you their troubles. It is not so much by their words as by their air.

Anyway, Barrage leaned back in his chair puffing at his pipe and staring out at the ocean and began to talk, and I had not the courage to stop him. No, I had not the courage. It was plain that he found it an immense relief to speak about it all to a sympathetic listener, to one, at least, who contrived to appear sympathetic. As he went on, his rather weary eyes lit up, and his stuffed bosom seemed to expand, so great was the relief which was there.

He told me what I had guessed, that his university career at Cambridge had been cut short owing to debt, and his father, a landowner in Somerset, at a loss what to do with him, had jumped at an offer to ship him off to Australia. He had had no luck in Australia, or he had not liked it, and he had gradually drifted up to California, after a halt of some months at Hawaii.

"It was not a bad ranch I got on to in California, but I didn't care for it particularly, and I might have gone off eastward if a certain thing had not happened.

"Do you know California? We boys used to go for a round-up now and then to a town on the coast—city, they call it out there—a pretty enough little place as far as scenery goes, called Unigenitus. One of the old Spanish settlements. There was not very much to do there in the way of delights, but after a ranch, you know, any kind of a town is thrilling.

"We used to go to a dance-hall there which was built practically on the beach. You know how those things are all over the States. This one at Unigenitus is like the others at all the seaside places. One side of it was open to the sea; there was a balcony and a lot of chairs on that side. The walls were covered with American flags and flags dangled from the ceiling. It wasn't a very sporty place, or even very lively, compared to what I had seen in Australia. The loud nights were when the boys used to come into town. They would get all boozed up before they arrived, they would bring girls along with them, and sometimes it would end in a fight. Those were the tough nights. But at no time was it a film-drama kind of hall.

"I used to go there and loaf and smoke cigarettes and look out on the sea. One night a girl I had not seen before came up and asked me if I felt lonely. She said she would dance with me if I liked. Now, I can't dance: I am too clumsy: even the few steps that my sisters used to teach me at home I can't do.

"I told her that I couldn't dance. She said that made no difference—she would teach me—she was there for that. If only I had taken her at her word then! I think it would all have been different if I had known how to dance.

"She leaned, or rather half-sat, on a table near my chair and talked a little. She belonged to the place. The proprietor had brought her there lately from Los Angeles, where she had been a movie actress, to be a sort of floor-manager and general introducer. The proprietor, Charlie Driscoll, had been in the ring, and did the floor-managing himself on the rough nights.

"I offered her a cigarette and lit it for her.

"'What are you besides American? Italian?' I asked her.

"She laughed and said that the U.S.A. was good enough for her. And I never did find out what her origin was. Her name, Jessie Mortal, told nothing, for it was probably borrowed. She spoke English with some kind of accent which was not altogether American. Perhaps she was Russian. Perhaps she came from New Orleans where there is a lot of French blood, isn't there? Or she may have been Mexican. I don't know.

"The band struck up again and she jumped off the table and went waltzing with her hands on her waist and the cigarette between her lips on to the middle of the floor. She was caught

up, not by a man, but by another girl, and the two fell in with the dance.

"That was the first time I had really looked at her. I can't describe her. I see her now like I see you, but I can't describe her. The ocean out there might be the floor, and this deck the balcony where I was, and God! I see her dancing. She wore a black frock cut rather low in the neck and rather high in the skirt. It was covered with some kind of jet which took the light as she moved.

"You might not call her very pretty; some men out there didn't. She had brown eyes which would look at you steadily, with good-humoured smiling gravity. She took a man seriously, and she made allowances for him—that is what you thought when you looked at her. Perhaps it was right. I suppose her features were irregular, and sometimes she put too much carmine on her lips. What you couldn't help noticing when she was dancing was how well she was built—'harmonized,' the German who led the band called it—and that was just the word. Her trim feet and ankles finished her off perfectly. And I have never seen such dancing. There was gaiety in it and give-away, and yet a kind of dignity, too. The girl she was dancing with didn't dance very well, but she was too good herself for her show to be spoiled by that. . . .

"Before long, a time came when I couldn't get her out of my head. You know how it is with a man in lonely places where he has not much chance of meeting women—he gets sentimental about any woman who looks kindly at him.

"It was worse than sentimental with me: I could think of nothing else but Jessie Mortal. I hadn't much money, but whenever I got any I took the long journey to Unigenitus. And there I would hang about till evening, till the dance-hall opened and she appeared. I never met her about the streets in the day-time. I knew the boarding-house she lived in—in a small town you get to know those things easily—and I went there one afternoon after I had drunk too many cocktails. She was out, or they said she was, and that same evening in the dance-hall she made such a row about it that I never dared to go there again. She even threatened to leave the town if I persecuted her, as she called it.

"She wasn't very encouraging. The fact is she didn't care anything about me. I didn't appeal to her. She was much more coming-on with other men that she was with me. There was nothing whatever of the prude or the outraged innocent about her. I used to wish there was. When I was away from Unigenitus, nothing else could I think of but what men she was with and how she was treating them. Besides, there were many things that could happen to her. The men were sometimes rough. It was maddening.

"I carried these thoughts to San Francisco, where I had taken myself to get rid of them. I told Jessie that I was going to San Francisco to look for a job, and she accepted the news with perfect indifference. But I had Jessie with me in San Francisco right enough. She used to come between me and the newspaper I read. If I went to a theatre and saw dancing—well, you know, could any of them dance or look like Jessie Mortal?

"Then one day I got a letter from a chap I know who kept a garage at Unigenitus. He related casually that there had been a row at a dance-hall one night lately. A drunken rancher had thrown an ice-cream soda all over the girl at the soda-fountain, then smashed a few glasses, and then tramped down the room intending to go out. Charley Driscoll was away that evening, the dancers were few and mostly women, and nobody cared to interfere with the man, who looked ugly. They all stayed huddled at the top of the room round the soda-fountain where the girl was crying. Then Jessie Mortal stepped out from the crowd and followed the man down the room.

"'If I had a revolver,' she said, 'I'd shoot you.'

"Thereupon the man plucked out his own revolver. 'Shoot *me*, you—! I'll put daylight through *you* if you don't talk polite!'

"But Jessie darted in under his arm before he could think, and grabbed the revolver. She held it out. 'Now you go back and apologize to that girl and pay for what you've broken.'

"You think the man did it? It would be a nice story of a heroine. He seized hold of her, took back his revolver, and then laid her out with more or less gentleness on the floor, and went out of the dance-hall laughing. The girl at the soda-fountain continued to cry. But Jessie didn't cry. She was very white under her rouge.

"'If ever I meet that loafer I'll kill him,' she said.

"When I had read that, I packed my trunk and went back to Unigenitus.

"In the dance-hall, the night I returned, she never came near me. I don't know whether it was on purpose or not.

"However, I sat there stubbornly till everybody had gone. Even then she didn't seem in any hurry to speak to me. But I called her, and she came slowly out on the balcony.

"Nobody was near: Charley Driscoll was in a far corner inside the hall making up his accounts, and the girl at the soda-fountain was getting ready to go home.

"She put both her hands on the little table and bent over it, looking at me sitting deep down in a rocking-chair. We had the table between us. She had a very red flower pinned at the opening of her gown, and another was in her hair.

"She said: 'So you have got back?'

"I answered: 'Yes, I've got back. You brought me back.'

"'*I* did?'

"'What was that row here the other night? What did that brute do to you?'

"I thought she would burst out with an indignant account of the outrage. Instead, she looked out at the dark sea and the stars—the great throbbing stars you see out there. She had fallen into a reverie, and there was half a smile of tenderness hovering in her lips and eyes. So she remained for some little time, thoughtful and smiling like that, and I looking at her in bewilderment. There was no noise but the little waves splashing on the beach.

"'Jessie,' I said in a whisper, 'I know who he is. I'll kill him if you say the word.'

"She shivered, seemed to wake up, and the smile disappeared. She turned on me impatiently.

"'Oh, I didn't mind that one little bit,' she said. 'Forget it, do you hear?'

"'Jessie,' I said miserably, 'I've come to the end of everything but you. Nothing exists for me but you. I can't eat or think or sleep. You know it. I never thought it could be like this. I'd go to the end of hell for you. Jessie—Jessie!'

"I tried to take her hand, but she snatched it away.

"'I don't love you at all,' she said. 'If I did I'd say so. Listen, do you know what's going to happen to you? You're going to have a sickness. Sure as your name. You go to the hotel and go to bed and send for a doctor.'

"With that she ran back into the dance-hall. 'Mr. Driscoll, I'm going home,' she called. 'Wait for me, Mary; I'm coming with you.'

"Then a moment later I heard her voice again. 'Mr. Driscoll, there's a man sitting out on the balcony. He's not well. You ought to take care of him.'

"She was right. It was big, good-natured Charley Driscoll who got me back to the hotel and put me to bed. I had picked up scarlet fever at San Francisco. I was moved to a little cottage on the outskirts of the town, because the ward for infectious cases in the hospital at Unigenitus was a small one, and just then there was no room in it. There was also no nurse to be had, and I suppose I might have died before one had been found if a woman in the town had not volunteered to nurse me.

"It was Jessie Mortal. She cut the

dance-hall and everything else and spent days and nights in that wretched cottage along with a sick man, listening to his delirium, humouring his fancies, always on the watch, never flagging. Who could do more for love? I can't bear to think of it now: my heart goes out of me when I think of it.

"And yet, when I was convalescent and toddling about for short walks in the sun in secluded places, she told me again she did not love me. I asked her to marry me; I said I would bring her home to England to my people and tell them all she had done for me. But she would have none of it. She wouldn't allow that she had done anything out of the common. She went as far as to say that she would do as much for other men in the town—'if they had made themselves as much of a nuisance to me as you have,' she added. It may be hard to believe, but I never even kissed her. I kissed her hand a few times—that's all. She wouldn't let me do even that often.

"When I was really mending, the doctor told me to go somewhere for change of air. I hadn't the funds to go out of the State. I decided to go to Pasadena, and I asked Jessie to come with me.

"'Never in this world,' she said. 'When I'm disinfected, and the doctor allows me, I'm going back to Charley Driscoll's. That's where my heart is.'

"She put her hand on my arm. 'Never mind: you'll find a lot of nice girls down there, even if you are a big stupid Englishman.'

"With that I took a piece of paper out of my pocket and rather absurdly I wrote on it some old words which I had kept in my head from the time I used to hear them in the chapel at school. I wrote them out and shoved the paper over to her. These were the words: '*My step hath turned out of the way, and my heart walked after mine eyes.*'

"'That is me,' I said.

"I thought she would laugh, but she didn't.

"She looked at the paper long enough to read the words over three or four times, frowned in a puzzled way, coloured a little, and then folded up the paper and kept it.

IV

"I SPENT a tedious, lonely month at Pasadena, hating to be there. The evening I came back to Unigenitus I thought myself in Heaven.

"After dinner, of course, I went over to the dance-hall. From the place where you pay your admission you have the whole floor in front of you. Something was going on. The people had formed a circle, and in the midst a man and a woman were dancing. The woman was Jessie. The man was the same man who had thrown her on the floor. He was a very good-looking chap—a man whose name was Caro. He had—look here, I can tell you who he was just like. Have you noticed Plater, that Captain in the Borderers who plays cards with us?"

Barrage, who had been gazing before him while he was talking in a kind of hallucination, as if he saw what he related, now turned and looked at me.

Yes, I had noticed the man he spoke of. He was one of those young Englishmen who have appeared since the war, whose social position it is hard to fix once they are in uniform. They go everywhere, they speak in educated voices, they have an unruffled demeanour. They are found in the most expensive hotels and restaurants just as much at ease, and with much more engaging airs and manners than the advertised millionaires, young or old. Sometimes they turn out to have been in extremely moderate positions before the war.

Plater was a man of this kind. Superficially, he had all the marks of the well-bred Englishman, and yet, to one well acquainted with the type, there was an indefinable shade of difference. Perhaps he was a little too assured, a little too insolent. Old Bar-

rage seemed to me to be much nearer the real thing.

But no woman would look at Barrage while Plater was by. He was perhaps the handsomest man I have ever seen. He was a little above middle size, extremely graceful and lithe, with dark hair and eyes and a little dark moustache. His hazel eyes were fine, with a sort of humid brightness in them; but they were faithless and sometimes cunning. There was an irresistible seduction about him which he exercised without apparently trying to do so. He was a man I would not trust five yards out of my sight, but if I had been a woman I should have ruined myself for Captain Plater.

"Yes, I know him," I said to Barrage. "There's a man of fine favour and shape, if you like."

I could not help a glance over Barrage. What chance could he ever have if his rival looked like that?

He sighed heavily.

"Good God! Do you think Plater handsome, too? Frank Caro was even better than Plater, or the clothes he wore showed him off better. He danced wonderfully. They were dancing a kind of tango, indecent and abandoned, and Jessie was putting her heart into it. Her face was flushed, and she half smiled, and looked as if she would have laughed outright for very joy if it had not been for the tension. . . .

"'She's clean gone on that feller,' said Charley Driscoll, who had come out of his box to watch the show. 'And to think he knocked her down on the planks here, it's not three months ago. Oh, women, women!'

"I went away from the dance-hall and back to the hotel and lay awake all night.

"After lounging about all the next morning in the bar of the hotel, I made up my mind to go and see Jessie. She had often forbidden me to see her elsewhere than at the dance-hall, and I knew it would be all over with me if she happened to take it badly. But I was desperate; it was neck or nothing.

"She no longer lived at the boarding-house. She had taken a flat in a new street in which as yet there were only three houses, and the rest building-lots with real-estate men's signboards. It was up-hill, above the town. When I got there about three o'clock of a hot, sunny afternoon, I found the door of the house standing wide open, and some children who were playing there told me her flat was on the third floor.

"The only door which opened on the landing of the third floor was half open. There was a card up to say the bell was broken. I went into the passage. At the end of the passage I saw a bedroom. The foot of the bed was nearest to me. A man was lying crosswise on the bed, his arm hung over the end rail, and a cigarette was smoking in his fingers. I could only see this arm and hand, and his high boots resting on the floor, and the knees of his riding-breeches. But I recognized the big checks. It was Caro!

"The reason I could not see him altogether was that Jessie Mortal stood between me and the bed. Her back was turned. Her shoulders and arms were bare, and she seemed to be doing her hair.

"I made a movement, and she turned round, still with her arms above her head, without any alarm, with just a look of inquiry. But the moment she recognized me her face changed to fury —yes, hate and fury. She never said a word: she swung out her arm and pointed to the door. I knew as well as if she had spoken what it was: she did not want Caro to see me there. Standing with one hand on her hair, and the other white arm outstretched, and her whole face on fire with rage and also with dread—that is the last I saw of her—that is how I saw her last. . . .

"For some time my people had been writing me chiding letters calling me a slacker because I had not gone home for the war. There was nothing to keep me now. I was drunk all the week before I started. But I never went near the dance-hall—or at least, if I remember right, I did once, and

heard Jessie tell them that I shouldn't be admitted as I wasn't sober. But that may have been a dream. It was a chum, one of the bar-tenders at the hotel, who finally put me on the train. And here I am."

The passengers had come out from the church-service and were walking the deck.

Barrage bent forward with his head in his hands. I felt rather sorry for him.

"I suppose your Jessie is happy with that man?" I said.

"I don't know. Somebody said he knocked her about. How I hate him! Why I didn't kill him before I left, beats me. I believe she might have married me after all if *he* hadn't taken her. God, how I hate him!"

V

Monday and Tuesday the heat became intense. There was little sun, but a continental mist and the dense rain. On the oily sea great patches of seaweed floated. Some of the passengers became morbid about floating mines and submarines. The greatest part gave up all vanity of appearance, and sprawled about listlessly, or unhappily dozed. The ship was taking a very southerly course and going slow.

On these days I only spoke to Barrage once.

I met him on the stairs before lunch on Tuesday, he coming up and I going down.

He said he had been to Plater's cabin to fetch a pack of cards.

"He's got a ripping cabin all to himself on the same deck as ours. Lucky brute!"

It was quite in keeping with the rest of the treatment inflicted on him by his particular party that they made him run their messages for them. The Australian, too, bullied him worse every morning, and he took it without complaint. The base of the Australian's vituperations was that Barrage was in a funk about U-boats. No doubt he was in a funk himself and was shouting to keep up his courage.

"That man in your room is very noisy," I said now. "He wakes me up. Why don't you squelch him?"

"Oh, he's a bounder," said Barrage, and left it there.

I, too, left it there. I took no interest in Barrage. His story only moved me to a vague pity. So many lovers have suffered from the preferred rival since the world began! And Barrage was a destined victim. Even an ordinary man—the Australian, for instance—could cut him out with a woman; what could he do against a man who looked like Plater?

I thought with a certain complacency upon the rightness of my estimate. He had indeed done all the things I had inferred from his type, and he was ready to ruin himself for a girl in a dance-hall who did not want him.

"If she had held up her little finger," I thought, "he would never have gone near the war."

On Tuesday night I stayed on deck till half past twelve. Then, reluctantly, I went below. I saw that Barrage and the Australian were both in bed. They were disputing from bunk to bunk about something—the best grease for brown boots, I remember—but they soon fell silent.

I had to leave my door wide open or smother, and the noise of their snoring came across the narrow passage. The ship's bell had been suppressed; from time to time I read the hour on my watch by the advantage of an electric flash. Half past one; and then the next time I looked it was seventeen minutes past two. Just after that, I heard a low moaning sound from the opposite room, and then, in the dim light of the passage, I perceived the tall form of Barrage pass quickly.

I concluded that he had found his room unbearable and had gone to finish the night on deck. I thought of doing the same myself. I lay there deliberating about five minutes, I suppose,—I do not think it was less, but it might have been more. Then Barrage passed

the door again. I thought that the ship's guard had turned him back, and I got out of bed meaning to ask him.

His cabin was quite dark. I turned on my own light. It was dim and threw a dim light into the opposite room.

I saw Barrage standing there in his pyjamas facing me. He was holding his hands before him limply, and he was looking down at his hands. He never saw me.

I thought of calling out to him, but he looked so odd and uncanny standing there like that in the dead hour of the night that I refrained. I could just make out the red face of the Australian lying on his back, fast asleep. All this could only have been half a minute, and even as I looked Barrage fell over on his bunk.

I put out my light and tried to sleep.

VI

TRAVELLERS know how rumours get about when anything has happened on shipboard. Nobody says anything that can be traced to anyone having authority, and yet there is a sensation of something in the air, and not a few appear to know something.

On Wednesday morning, about an hour before lunch, I had this sensation. People talked together in low voices, in groups of three or four, and broke off. I began to wonder whether anything had happened to the ship.

My neighbours at table were a tea-planter from Kandy and his wife, whom he was taking back to England. She was a pleasant, talkative woman, very full of the importance of the events of her long journey, as one who could not get over her surprise that her life had turned out so incidental. And it was she who blurted out as I took my place:

"Have you heard of the murder?"

I stared at her, thinking the great heat had stolen her wits. But there was a "hush!" from several people.

Her husband said lamely:

"Nobody knows what happened."

It appeared that their cabin adjoined the cabin of Captain Plater, who had been found dead in his room. They had heard some gossip from the steward. But the story was not encouraged. Another lady said that she had heard positively from the purser that Captain Plater had died in a fit.

After lunch, I spoke to an American journalist I knew who would be sure to have information if anybody had.

"Nothing wrong has happened," he said. "It was a natural death. But I can't get details. They aren't giving anything out."

I looked for the dead man's party. They were sitting together. The nurse looked white and dejected. Barrage sat with his head in his hands.

I knew the ship's surgeon; I had made a voyage with him before, and I knew some friends of his in England.

About half-past four I went down to his cabin.

"Yes, it was a murder," he said, "But I'm telling you confidentially—don't let it get round. The company doesn't want anything like that. For the present we'll say it was a fit. We shall have a service and put him overboard."

"But how was it done?" I asked. "Isn't there some mistake?"

"Mistake? No. I don't make mistakes about such matters. Somebody went into his cabin when he was asleep and throttled him—choked him to death. His head was on the floor. What puzzles me is the strength and persistence it took to do it. It was more like a beast than a man. And then, why was it done? There doesn't seem to be anybody in the ship that he knew before he came aboard. He was only in the States three weeks. I'll tell you what it is—there must be a German spy aboard here. That's the only way to account for it. But even so, why should he single out Plater? There are a good deal more important officers than Plater on the ship."

He got up and moved about the cabin distressfully.

"It's a beastly mess—a damned beastly mess," he repeated. "Well, God forgive us all."

The funeral was at six. Captain Plater's comely body—already how changed, alas!—passed away in a wall of fog.

After it was over, I stood on the main deck leaning on the rail. It was inexpressibly dreary. The damp sea-wrack came in gusts; the ship crept between the grey walls. They did not want to use the fog-horn, but they were obliged to as the lesser of two evils, and every now and then it bellowed over the waste of waters.

As I stood there, a man came up and stood by me.

It was Barrage, bare-headed as usual, and smoking a pipe.

"Were you at the funeral?" I asked.

"Yes. Frightfully solemn, especially when you know the chap. That was funny about Plater. They say he had a fit. He seemed quite healthy. I'm sorry. He was an awfully decent chap." There was a pause, and then he went on again.

"I had the rummiest dream last night. Nightmare, I suppose it was. You know that dance-hall at Unigenitus I told you about? I thought I was there in the evening, on the balcony by the side of the sea. Jessie came out there. She pointed to her face and said: 'See what he's given me this time!' There was a bruise on her cheek. I looked into the hall. Frank Caro was talking with another girl. I went across the floor and caught hold of him."

"Killed him?"

"Yes; strangled him." Barrage gave a short laugh. "I rather enjoy the thought of it. When I heard about poor Plater to-day, it all came back to me. You know I never could look at him without thinking of Caro."

He knocked the ashes out of his pipe and added:

"It was a frightfully vivid dream. I must have caught hold of the side of the bunk or something, because my fingers are all stiff."

He held them out—thick strong fingers they were—and worked them up and down.

The fog-horn boomed dismally, and the wreaths of fog came about the ship denser.

When the noise had ceased, I said:

"I shouldn't think about it, if I were you. Especially, I shouldn't talk about it."

"Oh, I don't. I hope you didn't mind my telling you like that on Sunday. I feel better since I told you. I wanted to talk about it just once so as to get it all before me. You looked as if you would understand."

VII

For the rest of the voyage Barrage and I did not come together except just to nod when we passed on deck. The last night, as we were entering the Mersey, leave was given to have a little music. This took the shape of a piano and fiddle played by two soldiers. They gave us the popular airs of London and New York.

At about half-past nine I went below. As I entered my cabin I saw Barrage as I had seen him once before—kneeling by the side of the bed, with his arms out and his face buried in the pillow.

I was not anxious to speak to him; but he seemed so desolate, so heavy-hearted down here in this empty part of the ship, cut off from the other passengers, that I had a movement of pity.

"Are you ill?"

He raised his face. It was wet with tears. "Do you hear that?"

He meant the music, which came to us rather faintly down here.

"That is what they were playing the night I saw her dancing with Frank Caro, the night he took her from me."

I was near the end of my patience with his obsession, his love-madness. Had he nothing better to think of than a woman who had thrown him over?

But I said:

"Never mind. You will hear from her again. Women never leave you except when you want them. Perhaps she has left *him* by this time."

He knelt up straight on his knees.

"Him? He's *dead*."

I knew it was absurd, but I was awe-stricken. I must have gone quite pale.

"How do you know?" I muttered.

He got to his feet, turned his back, and began to brush his hair.

"I don't know *how* I know," he said; "but I *do* know."

VIII

BARRAGE was killed early in 1917. I saw his name in the British casualty list.

Not very long before this, I had to go and see a Californian who was connected with an American ambulance service. He was out, and while I was waiting for him I took up some of the Californian papers which were on his table. In one of them, several months old, my eyes lighted on a sensational heading: "*Death in the Ball-Room. Man Strikes Sweetheart, then Falls Dead.*"

It related in a dramatic and highly coloured way how a half-drunken man in a dance-hall in a small town on the coast had drawn his revolver on a girl employed there, threatening to shoot her, and had then struck her in the face with the butt-end of it. It was quite early in the evening, between seven and eight, and there were only a few people scattered about the hall. As soon as they saw what was doing, they ran up to seize the man; but before they could reach him he collapsed on the floor and died. The doctor said the cause of his death was strangulation.

Now the name of the place was Unigenitus, and it was the dance-hall there. The name of the man was Frank Caro and the woman's name was Jessie Mortal. The date was the evening before the morning in July that Captain Plater had been found dead, and the hour, making allowance for the difference of time, was about the hour when I saw Barrage standing in his cabin looking down at his hands.

I scanned the newspapers on the table eagerly, and from one a few days later in date I learned that the woman had committed suicide. A strange detail was that they found she had sewn in her dress (as a sort of talisman, the reporter thought) a little satin bag that held a paper on which was written these words: "*My step hath turned out of the way, and my heart walked after mine eyes.*"

INTELLIGENCE is the determination to avoid women. Wisdom is the subsequent recognition of the futility of such determination.

IN seeking respect a man pretends he is something he isn't, while a woman pretends she isn't something that she is.

THE proper way to kiss a girl is, in the interest of novelty, in a different way from the last man who kissed her.

SHEEP-FACE

By Stephen Ta Van

I

FLEURETTE has fallen asleep. She has the knack, common among professional beauties, of sleeping gracefully, and as she lies on the chaise-longue she seems still to be posing, consciously yet with little apparent effort. The lines of her astoundingly lovely face—a face celebrated a few seasons ago in the fashion shows and flesh bazaars—are scarcely relaxed. There is even a trace of the simper which flattery, the caricaturist, has sketched. Her slender body, long like a boy's, lifts the thin covering in a haunting curve.

She is at rest: a beautiful woman obviously vain, indolent, selfish; fundamentally good-tempered, capable of passion, not ungenerous at times; eager for choice foods, good Burgundy, fine clothes, the kisses of the man of the season. Failing to grant her fastidiousness, one would do her an injustice; she is not gross. Granting her constancy of courage, one would deny one's own intelligence. These lacks and leanings are characteristic of the type which, solacing and mocking me time and again, like an elusive refrain, has helped to shape my life. I call it Sheep-Face arbitrarily, because the name seems to me, for some reason that I cannot clearly explain, to fit the type.

I am sitting cross-legged on one of the swollen armchairs, upholstered almost to the bursting-point, that abound in our best hotels. Lured by the silence, my ego comes forth to contemplate—the ego which is the essential Me, and of which the Ta Van who flourishes efficiently by day as the Company's promotion man is but one product.

It is no longer a boy's, my ego. It does not change from hour to hour, becoming in turn Caligula, an ascetic, a malefactor hung in an iron cage against a wall, a lover kind and true, a monkey hunting fleas in the sun, a Don Quixote, a fugitive before ancestral chariot-wheels, an artist, a grave-digger. The prophet and the poet that were in me died long ago, the one smothered by a sense of humour, the other a suicide inglorious but none too mute.

Yet to a degree I am still mobile, still untouched by the atrophy which is Age. Essentially I am young. Three influences have kept youth in me through many stormy passages: the first, ambition—the will to express myself; the second, an invincible curiosity, the desire to see and to dissect; the third, Sheep-Face.

Being both old and young yet strictly neither, I may go lightly, without sentimentality or fear, to meet the coming crisis, the parting of the ways, Fleurette's and mine, which is imminent. It is hard to renounce a mistress whom one has loved, but one should do it philosophically. Passion will no more remain for a prayer than it will come at an order, and every love-affair has its definite conclusion. We may try to prolong it, may strive to deceive ourselves like the moribund who denies death until it rattles in his windpipe, but soon or late we must yield. Better to direct a decent funeral than to be left with a mouldering corpse.

Of course Fleurette has vowed with tears that she loves me more than ever, that she will never leave me. She pretended to herself as well as to me that she was speaking the truth, but I saw withdrawal in her dark eyes, felt it in

her hands, long and white like large pale flowers, as we sat this evening in the Park, watching the lights of the fleet, anchored in the Hudson, search the sky in gigantic arcs. Lately she has had a return of her sullen moods. I know that she is yielding to her love of change, and to her longing—to which she adds by self-dramatization—to see her daughter.

In the background there is the instinctive canniness of the female. For us who have been together many months, who are still fond of each other, the inevitable end is near. She must think of supplies. Perhaps she is planning in that queer way of hers, half impulsive and half design, one of her periodical reconciliations, or semi-reconciliations, with her husband. Maybe it is a new gallant; for some weeks a young aviator has hovered in the offing.

In any case, she will have a story plausible in her own ears, will be convinced of her own rectitude and sincerity. And who would have it otherwise? The last thing that one should wish for so beautiful a woman, and one so sure of unhappiness when beauty fades, is remorse. When the day of her departure comes—when I find her gone without message or address—I shall wish her nothing but good luck; and if in the grey days of her distant future she sends to me for money, I shall give it if I have it.

I could not have taken such a position a while ago. Yet nearly twenty years ago (Good God! is it possible that my love-life has lasted as long as that?) the lesson was taught me if I had had sense enough to learn it. From Fleurette my thoughts go back to Linda, the first sheep-face.

I am in St. Petersburg, Florida—not the cafeterial paradise of the Idle Stupid that it is to-day, but a lonely village in the sand, where few went and fewer stayed. I see the bungalow close to Tampa Bay, and the line of pelicans streaming with silly regularity athwart a painted sky. I am standing with Linda in the doorway, looking across the verandah at the launch that carries her husband out over the shining water. Her hand, beringed and with short, highly polished nails, is on my shoulder, my arm is lightly around her. Thinking of the moment when I shall kiss her lips I ask with the tactfulness of nineteen:

"Were you ever in love with Jack?"

She is silent a moment, then answers slowly:

"I suppose that I was as much in love with him as a girl can be with a man."

"Then why . . ."

"My dearest Steve, no woman stays in love with a man more than a couple of years. Men are too stupid, and we are too changeable. . . . Now kiss me, I may not want you to-morrow."

There you have blonde Linda, painted by herself. Into my affair with her I might have looked as into a crystal, and seen a miniature of the future, and a warning. But I had learned love from novels, and took Linda seriously, believing in her against herself. When she dismissed me I rebelled. She tried to help me out easily by staging a parting scene. I see it now—a rainy day in Tampa, with water streaming down the windows of a cab permeated by the dank and deadly odour common to all the aged cabs in the world in wet weather.

Linda was tender and sad, a heroine determined to renounce her young lover for the good of Society. She played the part only too well. Instead of spouting an adaptation of Sydney Carton from the cab steps and disappearing with graceful finality, I pleaded and besought. Poor Linda! She must have been terribly bored. She showed a good deal of control over a temper naturally sharp. Not until I exceeded all bounds by calling on her the next summer in the North did she tell me clearly how she felt, and even then I was too vain and stupid to understand. I still pictured her as the Ladye of Romance, from whom a cruel fate separated me. The knowledge that I should have gained from the experience passed me

by, and my pricked vanity healed as time blurred the memory.

II

I MARRIED early. As I look back it seems astonishing that my wife and I got on so well. I remember committing most of the cardinal matrimonial blunders that are so much more deadly than the listed sins. I persisted in arguing with Ruth as if she had been a man, and in expecting her to act in what Reason (mine) said was a rational manner.

She must have made a remarkable effort to meet the requirements, for I did not suspect how feminine she really was until after she had left me. We lived together eight years, and though we were friends as well as lovers, I misunderstood her as completely in the eighth year as in the first.

Towards the end of the eighth came the cause of our parting, the super-sheep-face, little Eve.

It is easy to describe a woman over whom one holds the advantage; but to define the charm of her by whom one has been overcome is hard. It is an elusive quality, often non-existent to others, inexplicable to one's self. The Eve of to-day is no more to me than a woman I once knew intimately, and feel kindly toward for that reason. Her magic is gone. But as I write her name —unwritten now for a long time—I am caught by a ghost of the thrill that used to shake me when I saw her. She was the one woman, the focus of all desire. He who has known that kind of love does not forget it, no matter how his feelings for the woman herself may have changed.

She was introduced to me as the prospective leading lady of an amateur play which I was to coach, for the ladies of some society or other in the ancient town of Tearle. I saw a girl of twenty, blonde, with brown eyes which showed a line of white beneath the pupil when the gaze was level. She had beautiful hands and a beautiful figure. Her manner was cleverly flashy. She took a good deal of trouble with me, being in a receptive mood on account of an engagement lately broken. I was her man, almost from the beginning.

Our love affair progressed through the following spring. The play was a melancholy thing, and when its tottering skeleton could no longer be upheld I produced another, in which I played opposite Eve. It was while working up a scene that I first kissed her—a Paolo-and-Francesca paraphrase; for that evening we rehearsed no more. She cried and spoke of her parents, and I assured her of the seriousness of my love, and went home drunk with the sweetness of her.

That summer was wonderful. By day I had to work, but the nights seemed made for dancing and sailing and long rides to some far inn. Sometimes it was a party, often we went alone. A hundred miles of moonlit countryside were ours, and if we spent one evening on the beach at Point o' Rocks, on the next we dined late at Counterfeiters' Castle, at the head of a lake far inland, drifting back when the mist lay thick on the meadows, and in the woods along the lake's edge the wild fragrance of midnight hung heavy.

So vivid were the impressions of that time, and so completely was I under little Eve's spell, that to-day I cannot hear with indifference certain airs they used to play for dancing at the Castle, or see an August moon shining down on water without remembering the witch-moon of that year.

Of course there was a struggle. We argued yea and nay interminably, holding each other's hands, and quarrelled, and made up. But each knew in secret, from the beginning, that there was only one answer. In spirit we were lovers the second time we met. In actual fact we had come to an understanding three months before my wife finally decided to leave me.

I doubt if Eve believed that Ruth would really go, or going, would remain away. She loved to play with danger, and the luring of a man away

from his wife fed her vanity. I had a strong attraction for her, and she often thought that she wanted to marry me; but the scandal that was let loose by my wife's actual exit frightened her badly. Also it was characteristic of her type that having won definitely, she should feel a reaction. The man whom she could have at will was not so valuable as the one concerning whose possession there was a lingering question.

The wonder is that she stood by me so long—especially in view of the accident which resulted in a complete physical and nervous breakdown, laying me flat for seven months. She began to cheat very soon, and before long, made reckless by my helplessness, had spun a wide web of deceit. With health, I could have held her interest for a time; ill, I was merely able to detect her lies, after suspicion had wakened.

The period that followed was ghastly. Little by little every vestige of belief in her vanished, and my world, distorted by physical pain almost beyond endurance, became a cavern of nightmares. Gradually the knowledge was forced on me that I gave every appearance of a broken prospect—a man not only without visible business assets, but shorn by weakness of all personal attraction for the charming, predatory, illogical, deadly, soft-and-hard female of the species. Finally I heard from Eve the bitterest speech that a woman can make to a man: she was tired of me. Health, beauty and victory gleamed insolently in her eyes, and when I mentioned other men she didn't deny the impeachment.

III

A RECITAL of the tedious steps by which I climbed up from the slough would be neither interesting nor essential to this story, which is of Sheep-Face. My ego saved me—the will to win and the desire to learn: the raw core of strength that in the ultimate test wins or is crushed. I came up by a devious path, battling always against the indifference of persons and events, which invariably presents itself to the sick man as active hostility.

By degrees I learned to be a comedian, to see and offer the ironic side. I couldn't pretend that life was sugary, but I could see its comedy, and my temperament became a screen, through which life came to me ironically. My ironic viewpoint, softened and developed, made me interesting—a sort of Yorick cheerfully rolling his own skull on the edge of the grave. It is now supported by enough health to give strength. I have a fair equipment for success, after much floundering; and one of the first signs of progress that I noted was the power occasionally to attract women. Having deserted me in my time of need, Sheep-Face came to aid me when her help was no longer a necessity.

Rose Marie; Mrs. Renauld; Hazel, Queen of the Backwoods Stage; Enid, sixth of seven alliterative sisters whose father was a Pioneer; Pearl, owner of a movie heart; Saving-Face, Mimi and Andrée, allies of the Services of Supply at Tours; Lynde's wife, dead in Demerara; Fleurette the Fair: to each of these, and to others, I owe gratitude for rest and surcease from the grinding of the mill. I think there was no one of them who did not manage to deceive me in part, and none who failed to believe that she deceived me wholly.

It is the weakness of the sheep-face, as it is that of other liars, to underestimate the listener's intelligence. My study of Eve, made in the cold light of disillusionment, after romance fell to pieces and reality showed a sardonic face, enabled me to discount every speech and act of her type-sisters. Since her time I have never put faith in a sheep-face, or made any sacrifice for one except willingly and with full knowledge of its ultimate futility.

The character of the Sheep-Face is two-formed: on the one side a personality unreal, a puffed-up thing of pretty speeches, plumes, stringed music, painted scenery and coloured lights, the cause and result of the self-dramatiza-

tion in which the owner ceaselessly indulges; on the other, and co-existent, a pawnbroker sharper than any man, hard, practical, merciless, acquisitive, cold. Neither side is one to invite the trust of any save the fool or mild-eyed stranger.

Somewhere between the two there dwells, one supposes, a real unrest, an aspiration, which gives the Sheep-Face an appeal and a mystery, rendering her interesting. One remembers that when Helen, that early sheep-face, walked upon the wall of doomed Troy, the elders sitting there absolved the young Trojans and Achæans from blame for making war because of a woman so beautiful. As to the woman herself, no thought of blaming her crossed their minds, for they were old, and wise, and fortunately ignorant of the banalities of modern Western thought. But what did Helen herself think of the young men and the old, and of the gods who ruled them erratically? There is that other scene, in which she bitterly reviles Paris for his cowardly flight from battle, and then falls into his arms. What did she really think of him and of her destiny?

All of us who have been lovers of a sheep-face have passed through scenes like that—have been reviled and then caressed. Each has his easy explanation that tickles his vanity, but all know its inadequacy. The mystery of what Sheep-Face thinks remains unsolved. She herself cannot tell us, for she does not know, and there is no authoritative interpretation of the strange things she does.

Saving-Face, wife of an architect, sought me as a lover in order to revenge herself on the husband whom she adored, and who was unfaithful. But she took the greatest pains to prevent the object of her vengeance from learning that she had wreaked it.

. . . The variety is endless. Doubtless in her strange, vague way, Sheep-Face is searching as restlessly for an ideal that will satisfy, as am I. Doubtless, too, if she found it she would be unable to resist the temptation to mar it and throw it away. That is her real tragedy.

IV

Fleurette stirs in her sleep and becomes quiet again, always gracefully. She cannot forget herself, even in dreams. Her self-centredness has a pathetic quality akin to a child's, without the child's ignorance. She covets things beyond her reach, and the things that she reaches break in her hands—the long, slender hands that love instinctively the touch of silk and velvet, and the weight of jewels, as they did in Antioch or Persepolis two thousand years ago. She would be happy if she had a billion dollars to spend, but only for a little while.

It will be hard to let her go. I have for her a real affection, genuine, if light. She is an epitome of the type of woman that seems to have been paired with me as a curse and blessing, and that I have loved in my fashion. She is also an individual, to whom I have become so accustomed that in a little while she might threaten to degenerate into a habit. I might begin to love her by the clock or calendar, as most husbands love, instead of by the mood. That would never do for me, or for her. Instinct tells her rightly that the end is near; experience tells me.

Sometimes in the inevitable hours of depression that come to the most obstinate of us, I long for the comfort and peace of a longer and more temperate emotion. Images of a different sort appear: Ruth, whose devotion I threw away on little Eve's account; Mary Ghaunt, my friend through many a crisis, whose hand I never touched except as a friend.

But when I revert to normal I realize that for me such a longing is a delusion. Unrest is my portion, with only the short intervals of comfort that Sheep-Face can give me, in that strange period between interest and satiety. The personality of the family man was in me once, along with the preacher, the sot,

and the manufacturer of toys, but my destiny lay in another direction—and there is no second chance.

Life moves in cycles, but one man's life is a straight line. We do not "recover" or "repent"; we drop back or progress We are like the frog in the well—we climb three feet and fall back two. Unlike the frog, and more fortunate, we never reach the top and subsequent disillusionment. Over us, as we strive, there is always the circle of blue sky, crossed by the green bough with delicate leaves that sways lightly across the mouth of the well.

Fleurette moves again. She would sleep more easily in the dark. It is not late, nor am I tired. The city's garden of lights, poppies of the night, is in full bloom. On the Avenue I saw to-day a woman with a vixen's face, over summer furs. It touched a chord—something unfinished, an affair not carried out. There was some unusual quality, some intriguing trick or turn of speech. She did not see me, but as she passed I caught a subtle perfume, always used, I am sure, by some woman I have known. Memory is strange and sometimes brutal. . . .

The woman with the vixen's face may prove to be a false lead, or uninteresting. But soon or late I shall meet another who will hold my interest for a time, and shall pass through with her a variation of the eternal tragi-comedy which gives relief from the grinding of the ego, and from the reaction which is the penalty that one pays for the splendid drunkenness of hard work.

Ah, Sheep-Face!

ROMANCE

By John F. Lord

HE had been reading knightly romances and grew dissatisfied with the present sordidness of the world. He believed it to be his duty to inject some romance into the daily grind.

On a rainy, muddy day he sallied forth to perform some knightly errand. He beheld a bewitching princess about to step from her limousine upon the dirty pavement. Hastening forward, he spread his fur coat under her dainty feet.

She looked at him in surprise.

"Well, of all the damn fools!" she exclaimed.

THE most futile thing in the world is trying to impress the woman whom you care about and who does not care about you that you do not care about her.

MATRIMONIAL news is of three varieties: whether the husband, the wife, or both, were to blame for the divorce.

THE DIVINE RIGHT OF TENORS

By Richmond Brooks Barrett

I

"I ADORE fat people—the sort that were round as balls when they were born and have never lost their baby curves. Of course I dislike people who have *grown* fat, people who should be thin. Do you understand what I mean?"

"Yes indeed! If I put on fifty pounds, you'd hate me. You love Lorenzetti, though, because he's been a cherub all his life. His stoutness delights you. It rightfully belongs to him, just as his round eyes belong to him."

"Everything in Lorenzetti's life *belongs* to him—his earnings, his dreadful lady-loves, all these curtain-calls. He doesn't usurp what should lie outside his province. It's a case of divine right with Lorenzetti. If he put on airs, tried an aristocratic pose, we should stop loving him. It's the perfect justice of his claims that makes him so extraordinary, so convincing. I'm sure the newspapers are truthful when they tell us about the girls waiting outside the stage-door for a kiss. I could see myself on that very errand. A kiss from Lorenzetti would be unique; he wouldn't pretend to be honoured; he would let one know right off the true state of affairs. Lorenzetti's so different from *you;* you're sophisticated, conceited—a man, in other words. Lorenzetti's an immortal baby."

"Oh, Lorenzetti's the greatest person alive—when he's behind the footlights. Once take away the incandescent barrier, however, not to mention that delicious Egyptian armour, and he loses everything but his fearful vulgarity. All barbarians are babies; Lorenzetti's not a bit different from the rest."

The man who had just spoken would have continued his argument, had he not at that moment realized that the woman beside him was not following. She had of a sudden leaned forward in her chair and indulged in an outburst of laughter. Lorenzetti, grasping the yellow curtain with one hand, had at last ventured forth alone on the stage. The audience, perceiving that Aïda and Amneris were not bringing up the rear, shrieked out its affection for the rotund Rhadames.

To the crowd at the opera "Aïda" meant Lorenzetti; the loudest shouts had therefore been reserved for the moment when Lorenzetti should appear companionless. The tenor toddled now to the footlights, tossed passionate kisses indiscriminately at his admirers, bobbed up and down in a series of abortive curtsies and scampered away. A ripple of mirth followed the absurd retreat.

"Do you *really* think he's amusing when he acts like that?" Lorenzetti's intolerant critic put the question disdainfully to his companion.

A frankly affectionate smile still played over her mouth as she answered him.

"I think he's always delicious," she confessed. "His curtain-calls are like those of all little boys."

"Upon my word, Virginia, you're *too* fond of Lorenzetti." The man was stern. "You're positively talking rot."

She smiled. "No, I'm really quite sincere. I am tired of people who talk in nice, polished and intelligent sentences. Nothing would tickle me more

than a man like Lorenzetti—all beautiful sound, without an ounce of meaning in it. I think brains are pernicious things; an empty head and a great voice!—I envy the man's lady-loves."

Suddenly she put a hand on her companion's knee and indulged in a few tender pats.

"Please don't worry about me," she begged. "I'm nervous—that's why I'm talking like this. At tea this afternoon I got engaged to the most intelligent talker in New York. The thought of my future's beginning to scare me. The strain of being a brilliant man's wife will be dreadful—"

"So you've taken Chester Bank at last—after all these years of silly hesitation? Ah, Virginia, I'm so happy—for him and for you."

"Thank you," she said and, sighing, put a queer question:

"Do people continue to converse after they're married?" she asked.

II

John Burden never forgot the perverse words of his niece at the opera that night. Five years later they took on a new significance.

Disconcerting rumours had got abroad in regard to the domestic relations of the Chester Banks; bidden to dinner one night by Virginia, Burden found himself alone at the table with his hostess. Here then was his opportunity; the moment they had settled, in the music-room, to the enjoyment of their after-dinner cigarettes, he would give her a straight talking-to, a real dressing-down.

But she allowed him no opportunity for his carefully planned lecture. While Burden contemplated the fire and drummed his yet unlighted cigarette on his thumb nail, his niece announced:

"My husband and I have agreed to march in opposite directions—did you know it?"

She continued, without a pause,

"We are so sick of each other's intelligence and conversational gifts! But we can't keep still; the minute we meet, we're off at a gallop. We say awfully clever things; we *are* a witty pair. The strain on our nerves and tempers is incredible, though. It's a case of too much mental stimulation, you see. We season our talks too highly—shake pepper and spices over the commonest topics."

"It would be criminal of you both—separation or divorce or whatever you're planning," Burden told her. "There never were two people more suited to each other's needs. Really, Virginia, if this marriage of yours goes to smash, I shan't have the slightest patience with you in future—I shan't have the slightest faith in you. I hate people with brains who deliberately throttle their reason in a crisis. You and Chester have irritable scenes, I suppose—as if every couple didn't!—and you refuse to make allowances for each other's weakness. You're absurd, both of you—and you'll ruin your lives, just because you want to hurt each other."

Virginia was cool. "We shan't argue; wanted to tell you the facts and then go on to something else. It's all settled, anyhow, you know. So let's drop it."

Burden, however, kept coming back to it.

Virginia, with a gay smile, refused each time to answer his questions, until the opportunity for a master coup came her way.

"Is there anyone else, Virginia?" Burden had pressed.

"Good heavens, no!" she cried.

"Then, after a short silence, "Unless—"

She broke off, scrutinized her companion archly for a moment and indulged in a soft laugh—"Unless—possibly—Giuseppe Lorenzetti; but of course he wouldn't have me. Dear Giuseppe!"

She hummed an amorous measure the tenor had made celebrated.

Her uncle's calm retort was rather unexpected.

"It wouldn't surprise me. You

thought you were going to make a great impression with that bit of news, didn't you? Well—marry your tenor if you want to. I'm resigned to *anything* where you're concerned. Lorenzetti's sly, Virginia. Don't consent to be merely one of his *affaires;* do insist on the legitimate thing, won't you?"

He was bitter and incisive.

Virginia laughed. "How vulgar; how horrid you are!"

III

THE following autumn, the opera opened with Lorenzetti on the stage in the rôle of des Grieux and with Virginia out front in the vastly more curious rôle of Madame Lorenzetti. It was brazen of her—this courting of publicity. Of course she had known beforehand that her appearance in the audience would create a sensation; there was no excuse for such a display of herself. Burden, in his mother's box, thanked God neuralgia had stricken the old lady that day.

Virginia, in her orchestra chair, had thrown her uncle a radiant smile—an amazingly unconstrained greeting it was! — the moment he entered the house. She was lovelier than ever and her costume was magnificent. In the past, Virginia had loved simple gowns and austere effects. But to-night! She belonged on the stage—the bright central splash of colour in a riotous pageant; behind footlights she would have been gorgeous enough, God knows, but she might have fitted into the picture. In the stalls, however, she was devilishly out of place—an operatic figure astray. She did not blend with the people about her; she was like a persistent clash of cymbals in a symphony that should have had serenity for its keynote.

After the first act, Virginia arose, beckoned imperiously to Burden and made her way up the aisle with as little perturbation as if she were strolling along a solitary forest path.

Burden, quite against his will, obeyed her gesture of invitation. They met in the broad space between the staircases. The man could not help flushing hotly, when he perceived that they were the centre of a perfect whirlpool of inquisitive people; Virginia, however, was very calm.

"I'm going behind," she informed him. "Don't be afraid—I shan't ask you to come with me. He still sings like an Olympian, doesn't he?" Over the man's shoulder she was watching the eager crowd. "I called you out here, because I wanted you to see me at close range—to-night of all nights. Giuseppe is so nervous; he begged me not to show myself."

She smiled. "The poor man is sensitive—would you believe it? *I've* been having a beautiful time; I have no more fine feeling than a rhinoceros."

Still surveying the pushing eavesdroppers, she laid a hand on Burden's arm.

"You're as nervous as my husband," she remarked. "I just wanted to tell you this—that I'm quite secure in my vulgar happiness, that the ostracism tickles me. Now go back to your box, you poor timid dear."

Burden would have forced himself to a cordial response—it would have been the only decent course—but Virginia with a light laugh pushed him gently away from her and, sweeping the round-eyed throng aside, disappeared.

Her orchestra chair remained vacant during the second act.

Burden, watching Lorenzetti in a half-daze, sought manfully to catch in the tenor something of charm, something even of infantile graciousness, that might justify Virginia in her strange choice. He failed to glimpse one physical trait that he could dub attractive. To him the singer seemed merely gross, an animal that made no more pretence than does a hog to human intelligence and self-respect. He was a wallower in mire and cared not a rap who saw him at his rooting and rolling.

Such was poor Burden's verdict; it was but natural, but just, therefore,

that he should become convinced of Virginia's insanity.

As a matter of fact, Lorenzetti was not the dreadful specimen Burden thought him. The typical Anglo-Saxon is incapable of seeing a single good point in a foreigner of the lower classes; and when that foreigner happens to be a professional music-maker, his fellow man's cup of loathing runs over. Witness Macaulay's disgusted comments on Piozzi the fiddler!

Burden, in his mother's box, grew hot with indignation as he watched this Italian trespasser on the family's fair domains. It was for all the world as if a wild boar had invaded an ancestral estate, and as if the creature watched poor Burden slyly as it rubbed its tusks up and down the trunk of one of the choicest trees. Bah—it was sickening!

The tenor, taking a curtain-call alone after the second act, did an appalling thing. With a timid, wistful appeal in his round eyes, he looked straight at Burden; then he struck his fat hands together on his breast and the next moment had thrown a loud kiss right at the other man. Burden gasped and, jumping to his feet, stormed out of the box.

Lorenzetti's salute was like a gadfly's sting. It sent Burden out of the opera house and into the street. As he climbed into his motor, he forged the resolution never again to enter the place on one of the tenor's nights of triumph. Of all spots to suffer ignominy! In the past, the opening night of the opera had been such a polite and pleasant occasion; now! Why, the evening had been simply incredible; and Virginia, the niece he had ever adored, had been responsible for the topsy-turvy farce.

One sorry comfort Burden had: Virginia had fled after the first act; despite her words, the retreat had been precipitate. He did not believe she had joined her husband in the off-stage hurly-burly. No—she must have rushed home.

The morning paper, however, took from him even this balm. Wincing, Burden read of an impromptu love-scene enacted at the stage door. As Lorenzetti and his bride had prepared to enter their motor, a crowd of admirers had cheered the pair; whereupon, the arch tenor had gathered Madame to his bosom and, to the hysterical delight of the bystanders, had planted on her lips a boisterous kiss.

"My darling leetle wife!" the idol of the populace had shouted—and had accompanied the words with a droll wink.

"Oh, my God!" cried Burden.

IV

THE morning paper contained other news of Lorenzetti—a feature article with photographs. Of course the picture of the tenor and Virginia—the already famous snapshot of them, arms linked, eyes intent on the Goddess of Liberty, who was for them a warning that New York drew near and the honeymoon was ended—of course that picture confronted one. The second photograph was, naturally enough, of a woman; a decidedly plump creature, bold-eyed and filled to the brim with southern fire. Santuzza Bellini—a dramatic, even a volcanic name! She had been famous once as an actress of the whirlwind type; Broadway had waited for her with expectancy but, alas! she had found it impossible to learn English. Critics whispered once of her "sheet-lightning performance" in a Bowery theatre as the wronged girl in "Cavalleria Rusticana." She had soon dropped out of sight.

Well, she was back in the arena today—and with a vengeance. She had an eye to effect—no one could deny that. The moment she had chosen for exploding her bomb could not have been improved on.

"I, Santuzza Bellini, sue for divorce my husband, Giuseppe Lorenzetti; I name as his paramour the woman who calls herself his wife." Santuzza still could blaze out with her old sheet-lightning intensity!

When one read the sensational article through, one learned that Lorenzetti's conduct was after all not that of a hardened criminal; his marriage to Virginia had not been the act of a conscious bigamist. The guilt was entirely his explosive Santuzza's. The union of the tenor and the Italian actress had been a secret one. Their life together had been turbulent—the lady admitted it. "He was unfaithful to *me*, his loving and obedient wife!"

Santuzza's insane outbursts had not been confined to the boards; one day, in a frenzy, she had cleared out—with a man in tow, perhaps, and perhaps also with a substantial sum of money. She had left behind a deeply tragic note—"I am going to drown myself and my burning heart; my body will never be found, for I shall choose with care my watery funeral pyre." The naïve Lorenzetti had never missed the money and had accepted without suspicion the demise of his electric spouse.

"I shall demand much alimony," Santuzza confessed in the columns of the feature article. "A woman who has so suffered must have something to salve her wounds." Ah—she was hard up; that explained neatly this resurrection or eruption or whatever it might be termed.

"Atrocious! filthy!" opined Burden.

He flung the paper away from him, and fixing an anguished gaze on the patch of street outside his window, wondered grimly whether or not he should ever have the courage to leave the house again.

A magnificent motor had just drawn up at the curb; it was the sort of equipage an Oriental potentate would have adored. Burden recognized it at once; the tenor's automobiles were notorious.

A bedizened footman held open the door; Virginia in an extravagant chinchilla wrap stepped out calmly.

For a moment she stood on the sidewalk and looked up and down—on the hunt for reporters, doubtless. Then she shrugged and disappeared beneath the entrance-canopy of the house.

Her greeting, in the drawing-room, was off-hand.

"I've been turned out of the hotel—naturally enough. Giuseppe was furious, but I *quite* understood. It's not the thing at all to harbour a man and his mistress under your respectable roof." She laughed. "I came here to tell you that I'm going to clear out of New York for a while. I thought you'd be in a dreadful muddle and I wanted to give you what comfort I could—my poor, wretched uncle. I'd much rather stay here and fling my share of the mud; but if I did, Giuseppe would have an apoplectic fit or lose his voice. He's so excitable!"

Burden was icy.

"I don't pretend to understand you, Virginia. It seems to me that you've made a ghastly mess of things. If I can ever do anything to help you, I shall be only too glad; but I really am not in the mood for an ordinary friendly visit. There's my mother to consider, you know."

He drew himself up.

"Can I aid you in any way? If I can't, I think you'd better not stay here."

"That's very sweet and frank and upright," Virginia acknowledged. "No, there's nothing you can do—at present. I came here to test you for a possible future need. You won't disappoint me—that's *my* comfort."

She walked quickly to the door.

"I may write you. Now I must be off—before your mother gets up."

With a graceful wave of the hand and an obviously amused smile, she left him.

V

Virginia did not write to her uncle; just a month after her flight from New York, she appeared without warning at his house.

"Such a complication!" she informed him, as she drew him down beside her on the divan in the drawing-room. "My poor susceptible Giuseppe has gone from under me. He and San-

tuzza are reconciled; she's living with him at his hotel. It's dreadful, isn't it? Of course, it's deliciously funny, too. I shouldn't have left him alone. I was a fool; and she's such a hussy."

Burden said nothing. The tidings had quite robbed him of breath. He just sat beside the incorrigible Virginia and rolled his head from side to side on the cushions piled behind him. His lower jaw had dropped, almost as if it had become unhinged from the force of the blow his niece had dealt him.

"We must act quickly," Virginia pursued, the light of conflict in her eyes. "Something's got to be done at once."

She paused, tapping one foot against the floor with the regularity of a metronome. "I don't want the whole of New York to shriek with mirth at my expense."

She turned of a sudden on her uncle, seized his limp arm and shook him lightly while she announced:

"Santuzza's *got* to get that divorce! Then . . . I shall publicly refuse to take my poor Giuseppe back."

Burden found voice.

"You'll publicly refuse to take him back," he echoed her words for his comfort. "I'll do my best to help you, Virginia—on that understanding. You *will* refuse publicly to take him back?"

He pressed the point.

Virginia watched him with wary eyes for a moment.

"Yes indeed I shall," she said in firm tones at length. "Now for my plan! Santuzza's developed a voice—an immense, booming mezzo—during her period of obscurity. Given a chance, she will do big things in opera. I *know;* I have heard all this on good authority. The fact that she's ruined the life of Virginia Bank—a niece of one of the directors—would be enough to keep her out of the Metropolitan for ever—that's obvious, isn't it? A contract for Santuzza would be contrary to all etiquette, naturally. Well, you see what I'm driving at. I want you to talk the thing over with the other directors, put it up to them that the lady deserves big rôles and that this divorce will be quite enough to overrule any possible objections to her appearing at the opera. Then you will go to her yourself, my poor uncle, and with the weight of your wonderful prestige upon you, you will tell her a trial awaits her and a possible contract of huge proportions. Legal freedom from Lorenzetti the only condition! You see how simple it is. Then, the divorce over, it will be my turn to speak out my fiery denunciation of poor Giuseppe. Everybody will be pleased—Santuzza with her prospect of greatness, Giuseppe with his skin whole and I with my recovered self-respect."

She laughed gleefully at the pretty arrangements and, linking her arms around Burden's neck, rubbed her cheek against his.

"*You* will be pleased, too, poor darling," she murmured. "Even while you're wading through the mire, you will see before you the day when the strayed sheep will be back in the fold and bleating with joy at its safe return and its dazzling, newly-washed fleece. You will be the one to scrub me clean of all this dreadful mud."

Burden, stiff as a ramrod, frowned down Virginia's tender advances: petulantly he turned his cheek away from her rhythmic, cat-like assaults upon it; with annoyance, he untwined her arms from about his neck. Then he jumped up and faced her.

"It is preposterous and degrading," he let her know. "It is simply one dirty subterfuge after another."

"Ah, I see that—I see it," Virginia returned. "But it is a question of the family honour; and there's no other way out. I've racked my brains; polite, decent methods won't *do*—I've found that out to my pain."

Burden gave her a glance of icy scorn.

"I'll do this last service for you, Virginia," he said. "Please don't think, however, that I'm impressed by your sudden regard for the family honour. You're in a sorry mix-up; you'd do

anything to get yourself out of it. I don't blame you; but I'm quite aware it's a purely personal concern. You don't give a damn for your family's integrity. It's just a question of your own rhinoceros hide."

Virginia sat up abruptly, aggressively; the most convincing and facile arguments were on the tip of her tongue. Burden gave her no chance to voice her protest; he strode through the nearest door and slammed it behind him.

VI

THE divorce was ridiculously simple; even the new co-respondent had been located without difficulty. The day after proceedings had closed, Burden presented himself at Virginia's hotel; in a gay little note she had begged him to come and drink tea with her.

"I still need you," she wrote. "You mustn't refuse me this."

She did not waste time on preliminaries. Burden had hardly got seated when she announced:

"Giuseppe and I were married this morning. We decided it would be better to finish the business up in that way; a public denunciation from me would have created *such* notoriety."

Burden was on his feet before she had finished.

"Ah—then that settles it; that settles *me*, at least. You have been very clever and very dishonest, Virginia. My regard for the family honour, my sense of decency even, won't allow me to stay here."

Virginia was wistful. "But—don't you understand that my marrying him was the supreme sacrifice? My dear, it was in direct opposition to my personal wishes. The least notoriety possible—that was what I considered when I took this step."

Burden shook his head. "That's the last dreadful lie you'll ever tell me, I hope."

Without looking at her, he turned and walked to the door.

Virginia sprang to her feet and, grasping his arm, held him firmly.

"No, no, you mustn't go till I've talked to you for a minute!" she exclaimed. "I want to tell you the truth; I want to show you just where I stand."

She laughed gaily and continued to tug at his sleeve. "Of course I've been dishonest—right up to this instant. That was the only way I could get Giuseppe. My whole future happiness was at stake. Now I'm his wife; now my career will be one long holiday. I love the vulgarity and the notoriety. I don't care a rap what stodgy, respectable New York thinks about me; I don't care a rap what *you* think of me. After all, it's a unique distinction to be the wife of a king among tenors. Giuseppe is just as authentic and magnificent as a Sultan. I shall revel in the money and display, because I shall know it's really regal. Giuseppe's pomp and millions make him as important as any Oriental ruler. I'm a queen, my dear uncle—the favourite wife in the most *gorgeous* harem. I'll never regret that I've married my Giuseppe. I love him—dear, fat, brainless and sunny creature that he is. The other women won't bother me; they never bother the favourite wife. I shall always be the happiest woman in the world. Ah—when Giuseppe sings in South America, think of the fireworks, the glory, and the noise! An operatic tenor is the only survival of real barbaric magnificence. My life will be one long triumphal procession; I'm a Roman empress without being afraid of the mobs that cheer me. Giuseppe and I are demi-gods. Do you wonder I told a few lies? Who ever climbed a throne without a little perjury?"

Breathless with excitement, she gave the man's sleeve a last triumphant pull and let him go.

"You're wondering what's the trouble with me, aren't you?" she queried. "Well, I'm not sane, of course. I'm raving mad. But since I shan't ever recover my senses, it doesn't matter at all."

Burden turned his back upon her and without a word rushed for the door.

"You are going out of my life—at this minute—for ever," she called after him. "Everybody but Giuseppe has gone out of my life to-day. And you don't *know* what a relief it is to be through with civilization and intelligence!"

The last sound Burden ever heard on his niece's lips was a burst of laughter — bright, merry, jubilant, without a suggestion in it of bitterness or regret.

NIGHT SONG OF THE GIPSY

By Amanda Benjamin Hall

SILENCE alone is loud. The pass
Has heard no countersign of breeze,
No winds conversing with the grass,
Nor traffic of the trees.

The caravan will sleep till morn,
And each will make his dream his goal;
Even the trusted fire has gone
Down to a bloody coal!

But nothing can assuage my fire,
However still the night and long;
Out of my heart escapes desire
Like an unbridled song.

For scents of love and danger spill
Their sweetness on the witching air,
And either one may kiss or kill—
I do not care. . . .

The trail is sinuous, but soon
I move as swift as its surprise,
Striking a match against the moon
To light the lanterns of my eyes.

With all life in the open cup
I sleuth the ways of field or town,
Thirsty for joy to lift me up
And grief to strike me down.

My elders counselled "rest" to me,
And made encampment in the glen,
But ah, soon comes eternity,
And I can slumber then. . . .

SPRATER'S BUNGALOW

By M. L. Marshall

DO I know Rawal-purree? Rather! And the end bungalow nearest the jungle? Rather! Why, I can tell you more about that bungalow than any Englishman save one. No, I never heard it was haunted. What's it supposed to be haunted by? A snake—a big snake! Why, now we are getting "warm," as the children say, and I can tell you something about that snake if it's the same unpleasant brute I saw once and once only—but he hadn't begun to "haunt" then. When I stayed at that bungalow five years ago it belonged to a fellow called Sprater. He had been a woods and forests man, but came into a good bit of money unexpectedly, and so retired and built this home for himself and his wife; and a delightful place it was, though too near the jungle to please most people. Thomason and I were hunting butterflies on a short leave, for Thomason's collection was worth going far to see. He had an introduction to Sprater, who immediately, with more than Anglo-Indian hospitality, insisted on our being his guests.

It didn't take us long to find out that Sprater was not popular in the Station, though there was no reason so far as I could see for people to fight shy of him, as he was a pleasant man, and easy to get on with; but he dabbled in black magic, and carried pet snakes in his pocket, and it isn't everyone that likes snakes, or approves of black magic. Anyway, they hardly saw a soul; and she was a mousy little woman, who disliked Sprater's pets, and whose vocabulary consisted almost entirely of two words: "Oh, don't!" Sprater was fond of teasing her, quite good-temperedly, for he gave one the impression of being really fond of her, but when he began poking fun at her aversions, she'd start a string of "Oh, don'ts!" that got on our nerves. Thomason loathed Sprater, said he reminded him of a snake, and Thomason liked butterflies.

There were only two things to my mind reptilian about Sprater, his eyes and his wriggle. The former, though bright blue, were shaped like and had the curious fixed expression of a snake; and his body was apparently boneless, judging from the way he could twist himself about. He showed us one night, mother-naked, what he could do with his arms and legs; it was entirely horrible, and made Thomason hate him more than ever. He'd have made his fortune as a contortionist, but he was quite modest about it—said it was "a gift," and that nothing would induce him to demonstrate in public, "not even for a charity!" He certainly had a strange affinity for snakes, and in addition to other luxuries had a reptile house, not far from the bungalow, built on the lines of that at the Zoo; and there he would spend hours with his pets, kissing and fondling them in a way that even I, who felt tolerant towards him, considered revolting. The odd part of it was, Sprater assured me on his honour that all his treasures had their poison fangs intact, and could have done him in at any moment had they felt so inclined; but that's for you to believe or not as you like. One morning at breakfast Sprater brought an avalanche of "Oh, don'ts!" on us, by chaffingly assuring Mrs. Sprater of a great discovery he had made in conjunction with a native adept in black magic, the result of which he would shortly demonstrate to us. He was so genial and full of glee that it struck

us both at the time as queer he should be unable to see the effect of his chaff on the poor little woman opposite him. Some wives would have slammed out of the room, but she sat there staring at his snaky blue eyes, and ejaculating "Oh, don't!" at intervals, until we broke up the proceedings ourselves by pretending business. Two nights after this we came in from a bridge party and found the Spraters had retired for the night, but from the end of the verandah where we sat out for a peg, we could hear that Sprater was teasing his wife as usual, and that while he, as was his wont, was chuckling amiably, her ejaculations had a note of real terror in them. Their talk grew more and more audible, and not relishing our involuntary position of eavesdroppers we turned indoors. A short time after we were startled by appalling screams coming from the Spraters' room the like of which I trust I may never hear again. "The brute's murdering her," said Thomason, laying hold of his revolver, while I grabbed the first thing that came to hand, a thick stick. When we burst in through the verandah Sprater was nowhere to be seen, and his wife, still screaming, was standing flattened against the wall with an insane gaze fixed on a huge snake twisting and coiling upon the bed. It made no effort to escape or attack, and I advanced hoping to break the brute's back with the heavy stick I carried. But—you are not likely to believe this, though it's Gospel truth—when I got near the writhing mass, my hand dropped, for the creature raised its head and looked at me, and its eyes were Sprater's eyes, full of expression, and that expression was one of horrible fear. Mrs. Sprater had sprung on Thomason, who was aiming for the reptile's head, and clung to him shrieking:

"Don't shoot! Oh! don't! It's Willie; he can't get back, he can't get back!" and Thomason didn't shoot. The room was now full of servants, and the thing on the bed slipped down and crawled out by way of the verandah, not a soul making any effort to kill it. We all seemed held back by some dreadful power. Happily now Mrs. Sprater was insensible, and we picked her up and put her in the care of the Station doctor. She never recovered her reason, and gibbered continuously of Willie and "Hurroo," who alone could "undo it."

Hurroo was Sprater's teacher of devilish arts, but though we made search for him high and low, he disappeared that night as completely and mysteriously as his pupil, for no one ever set eyes on Sprater again. His pets were sent to the Zoo, the reptile house pulled down, and the pretty bungalow sold; and though I did hear no one ever lived there long, I never heard it was haunted. Rum thing about that big snake you were telling me of. I wonder if it had eyes like Sprater.

WHY I FOLLOW SO

By Harold Cook

LOVE is a young man
And a good brother,
Walking with me everywhere
And with no other.

Ah, he does not know yet
Why I follow so—
He was in an old dream
Dreamed long ago.

MOONLIGHT SONATA

By Muna Lee.

THERE were pretty flowers, easy to grow, she reflected listlessly; hollyhock and larkspur and marigold, bright, upstanding flowers, whose vivid colour would have glowed bravely against the dingy background of the house. Why hadn't the last tenant planted them instead of white petunias? Not that they were really white, these dirty grey blossoms, sticky, unpleasant to the touch—if the petunias had been bright rose or lavender, she would have been grateful even for their homely presence, but grey—grimy, sticky grey—they seemed like an overflow of the refuse heap. She wondered at the stray butterfly that hung above them, poised against a background of yellow-brown wall.

It was always like that in her life, she thought with an apathetic resentment. Dingy petunias instead of larkspur, which would have grown as easily—a dull backyard—a vacant lot in the foreground blowing high with weeds—Ed Hastings.

Ed Hastings summarized it all, well-meaning, clumsy, inert. He would not notice the difference, she told herself, with a certain bitter satisfaction, if white and crimson hollyhocks should spring up overnight in a corner of the picket-fence, or if the walk should be magically lined with stiff yellow marigolds.

She remembered one afternoon when they had driven together along a country road, and she had clutched his arm in an ecstasy at the sight of a purple finch fluttering above a redbud tree, picking delicately at flowers the exact colour of his wing. And he had looked at her, surprised, unable to see even after she had shown him how this was the incarnate joy of sun-flooded April. She had learned since then, she reminded herself harshly, not to try to make him feel the wonder of scent and sound and colour.

She wrung out the dish-cloth and turned from the door. Well, she would marry Ed Hastings and make him a good wife. He should have no cause to complain; and if there was a fragrant plot in her soul which should be for ever shut off from him he would never know, and would probably be relieved if he did know.

Oh, Ed Hastings would get just what he expected and desired, no more, no less. It was she who would be the cheated, the defrauded. It was she who would have the husband whom she had not chosen, whom life had put upon her. It was all a part of the same injustice. Neither had she chosen her surroundings, her parents; they, too, were a part of life's grotesqueness: there was nothing in all her world which would have been there had she had the making of it; nothing except that scent and sound and colour which sometimes poured itself about her from an overflowing universe.

If only Ed Hastings had been a little different, she repeated to herself that evening as they sat together on the bench between the two straggly locust trees of the front yard; if only there might have been a touch of magic in their marriage, at least in these scented evenings before their marriage! Resentfully conscious of her own hungry youth, she felt that life was cheating her, cheating her; and she cried out bitterly within herself against the injustice of it.

Ed Hastings hardly stirred as they

sat there side by side; certainly he suspected nothing of her silent revolt. If he had known, he would have taken her hand and stroked it in an effort to express his sympathy with an inexplicable feminine mood. Since he did not know, he leaned back contentedly, in a placidity that was almost stolid, thinking about nothing in particular but conscious of a pleasant sense of companionship and well-being. He was not a man of many words, and the quiet of the evening was soothing after the unaccustomed heat.

One of the things for which he prized the girl at his side was her rare quality of silence. She never bothered a man. Contentedly he gazed at the passing automobiles, without feeling any need of comment. By his side the stormy monologue went on silently. She examined his face with pitiless criticism in the fading light of late afternoon; it was so contented, so dull, so sheep-like a face; she could imagine it under any emotional stress and see exactly how it would look, reddened with pleasure, the mouth a little slack and foolish, or like a child's in disappointment or grief. There were no surprises in that face; nothing. She, too, looked at the automobiles which passed in a stream slowly thickening as the spring darkness drew on.

The breeze which comes with nightfall in the Middle West rustled through the locust leaves, lifted the pendulous clusters of blossom, shook their heavy sweetness down through the cooling air. The yellowish flowers, blackened by the spring rains, whitened slowly in the half light. Three fireflies darted across the street in eccentric, blazing zigzags. Ed Hastings took advantage of the dusk to lay his arm clumsily across the back of the bench. The girl leaned forward slightly, her eyes on the street; neither spoke.

She found herself thinking with a painful, almost pleasurable, intensity of what the coming of spring darkness might mean to two who loved each other and the spring. If it were not Ed Hastings here beside her—she dreamed vaguely of what love might be like. It was another of those mystical, starry things which she would never know. She would not have demanded fulfilment of love—she could have been satisfied with its pain. It was not happiness for which she longed, but intensity of emotion—any emotion other than this dull resentment against circumstances.

She realized self-contemptuously that she would in all probability be relatively happier as Ed Hastings' wife—what was happiness but an enormous well-being, a release from anxiety as to food and clothes and shelter? She did not care about it—not now. She wanted a poignancy, a depth of feeling, with which happiness had nothing to do. She would not mind if love hurt, mocked, even if in the end it eluded her—it was so little she asked, and life had so much. . . .

The man turned slightly that he might watch her face as the lights flashing by in the street fell upon her, flushing her cheek with the irradiation. He wondered comfortably of what she was thinking. He was very fond of her—he felt a warmth in his heart to see her there, so small against his arm.

The lamp at the street corner gleamed mistily through the gloom. Splotches of inky shadow splashed across the grass and on to the sidewalk in front. It was growing swiftly darker. Beneath the trees, they could see one another's faces only as whitish blurs in the darkness, except when the lights sped by in the street.

The girl grew tired of her reverie, impatient of her own train of thought; yet she felt no desire to talk. Indifferently she leaned back against his arm, her eyes closed, trying not to think, trying to lose all sense of identity in the sense of the night. The locust fragrance grew more insistent. She breathed it dreamily; there was nothing else so heavily sweet. Another perfume came to her upon the freshened breeze, more delicate than the locust, but poignant, with a quality aching, unsatisfied, clutching at her heart like a

pain. She realized without surprise that it was the scent of the petunias—it was a pity that that most haunting, most magical of all odours should belong to that grimy flower.

She sat up, and opened her eyes. Through the darkness the petunia bed glimmered more dimly than the face of the man beside her. He drew her back against his shoulder with a softly muttered protest.

She scarcely heard. Her eyes were on a rift in the sky, a rift edged with moving silver. Moonrise. She watched the molten flood reach out and overflow. The shadows grew more sharply black. Night lay in black pools around her, black pools washing ragged white islands of light. The petunias flowered swiftly out of the gloom like a mist, like a cloud, like the flowers of a dream.

She looked up to where the locust blossoms hung in snowy racemes. They moved slowly in the breeze. She felt an overpowering recognition of their beauty. She turned her gaze to Ed Hastings' face.

He leaned against the tree-trunk, a part of its shadow. The moonlight fell in an irregular bar across his cheek. His eyes gleamed through the dark. Blackness held his mouth and chin. Only the eyes and that moving streak of light were alive.

He stirred a little, turning his face from her in sharp profile. The light ran grotesquely across his features, there were splotches of black beneath his eye, the breeze made his hair a windy shadow. The hand upon his knee, lying palm upward with relaxed fingers, touched her suddenly with an inexpressible pathos; it was so strong a hand, so big, and here in the moonlight, empty, quiescent, so like Ed Hastings himself. She found herself wondering what it had done during the day, that powerful hand; she could see it, the fingers clenched about an axe-handle, the knuckles whitened under the strain; or gripping the reins that held to his will a strength even greater than his own. . . . Suddenly, without conscious volition, she slipped her own hand into his open palm. It closed about her fingers tightly, and clumsily Ed Hastings bent to kiss her roughened wrist. Her hand, too, was white in the moonlight. She looked at it dreamily. . . .

She drew away quickly in a sudden, unexpected shyness. What did she know about this man, so big and still and strong? For the first time she wondered what he was thinking. She realized as she had never realized before that she was to marry him, that his life was to be her life, that she was to go with him into the mystery.

The darkness closed about them for a moment as the moon slid behind a cloud. She looked up at the man's face, still with that feeling of maiden shyness. All at once she found a metaphor to express him. He was like a tree, rough of bark, unexpressed, uncouth to the point of grotesqueness perhaps, but alive and strong, and it might be—how could one know?—capable of bursting into unexpected blossom.

In this atmosphere of magic anything was possible: the locusts glimmered ghostly-white above her head, the petunias held up fairy chalices to the emerging moon; the vacant lot across the street was a tossing sea of shadow, ragweed and fennel and dock were a dim, waving mass like an embodiment of the wind. The emptiness had gone from Ed Hastings' face; there was shadow in it, and light; there was strength; there was mystery.

Ed Hastings' arm tightened about her. He liked the breeze against his forehead; he hoped it would be cooler to-morrow. He liked the silence of the girl, and her unaccustomed yielding to his embrace. She was a good girl and she seemed to understand a man. He liked, too, the white patches of moonlight at their feet; they were queerly shaped, there was one like a horse's head. He started to call her attention to it, then thought better of it. It was good to be here without talking; it was good to have her head against his shoulder.

He looked down at the curve of her cheek. How white it looked there against his coat, like—he groped for a word—like one of those flowers by the porch. How little she seemed, for all her capableness about the house and garden—how very little! He felt a desire to take care of her flood his consciousness. He felt an increase of tenderness. She seemed so pathetically dependent upon him, so infinitely precious. He leaned above her with a vague longing to make her understand the feeling that possessed him.

"Dear—" murmured Ed Hastings uncertainly.

She lifted her face to him with a sudden passionate gesture of surrender, and their lips met. The perfume streamed across the grass. The night eddied about them in black and silver waves.

THE ODDS

By Dennison Varr

LIFE met Fate one day and expressed a desire to gamble. Whereat Fate produced a pair of dice and the game was on. Life found himself steadily losing and suddenly stooped to examine the dice.

"Why, they're loaded!" he exclaimed.

"Naturally," said Fate. "I made them."

"Here's a pair I picked up somewhere," said Life. "Let's play with these."

So they played again, and again Life found himself losing.

Life picked up the dice and examined them.

"These are loaded too!" he cried.

"To be sure," said Fate. "I made them also."

THE difference between twenty and seventy is that at twenty a man is interested in fair young ladies, at seventy in their granddaughters.

A MAN'S duty is to attract success. A woman's, to attract successful men.

LIFE: An experience relished only by the very young.

THE BETRAYAL

By Mifflin Crane

I

DR. WEATHERBY had completed a successful colectomy; his customary amusing comments, an uninterrupted overtone to the serious business of the clinic, had acted as a stimulus to arouse his students' enthusiasm. As he turned to leave the theatre they arose in a body and applauded him.

He bowed and walked rapidly to the little door, through which, a moment before, two internes had wheeled out his patient. As he passed into the corridor the sound of appreciative clapping still came to his ears.

In his scientific enthusiasm his mind was for the moment mercifully detached from the unhappy indignities of his domestic life. He was still thinking of the operation, the fascinating and almost miraculous cleverness of his deft hands. He still sniffed the commingled pleasant odours of ether and chemical antiseptics, and before his eyes the theatre lingered, peopled with the white-robed nurses, the white-gowned assistants, the little group of graduate students on the floor and, above, the blurred faces of more than a hundred intent graduates.

An hour before, entering the door through which he had just passed, his mind had been oppressed by the sardonic failure of his other life, the life outside this work of his hands and brain. He was thinking then of his wife and of her latest vulgarity.

But, as usual, the sight of the clinic and the young, expectant faces of the spectators had taken away the burden of his oppression. That was a familiar and often experienced respite. For this reason he had been led, frequently, to look upon his scientific skill as more than an immaterial circumstance; at times he regarded it as an embodied thing, alive to his necessities, a benefactor, a giver of release.

He walked the length of the corridor, passing the opened doors of several wards, and reached his office. Here the necessary mission that would take the rest of his afternoon returned to his mind. The usual frown reasserted itself on his face, giving him that severe aspect common to most of his hours.

He glanced at his desk, gathered up several letters to be mailed, adjusted his hat, and left the little room with a hard and almost mechanical step.

Outside the hospital he climbed into his little runabout, driving through the streets toward the address he had in his mind. In the traffic the alertness required of him brought a little relief, and the crowds, as always, gave him a certain zest.

He liked this multitudinous aspect of life shifting before his eyes, and the clamour of its unnumbered activities that hummed in his ears. When he was younger it had charmed him and touched him to wonder; those were the days of his dreams.

Now his zest was coloured with an unvarying tinge of ironic comment. At one of the corners, brought to a temporary stop, he glanced toward the pavement and, among the many faces, saw those of a boy and a girl a little withdrawn and naïvely close. The young fellow, slender, enthusiastic, was standing with his head uncovered, bending toward the girl.

Weatherby saw her nod and the

boy's face coloured with the gesture of her assent.

He knew nothing, of course, about their conversation, nor what the boy had sought, but he guessed it as a trivial thing: some "yes" to a proposed call, a consent to see this boy in the evening, to go with him to a theatre, to dine with him in a restaurant. But that sufficed these two; it was a promised excitement; they clothed it in the false garments of their illusions. Weatherby smiled, his lips curving unpleasantly. Ah! The abounding folly of life!

The whistle of the traffic policeman sounded; he drove on. Presently he reached the street he sought, stopping in front of a shabby building displaying the familiar triplicate of three gilded balls. Frowning more intensely, he descended to the pavement and entered the shop.

A middle-aged man, half sinister and half ridiculous amid the confusion and grime of the place, was standing behind the counter. The doctor took the folded ticket out of his pocket, presenting it with a small pile of bills to redeem the pledge.

The pawnbroker received it, counted the money and, going back to a distant shelf, returned with a dusty leather case, which he opened, displaying Weatherby's set of silvered urethrotomes.

"Do you remember the woman who brought these here?" he asked.

The man nodded, uttering a sibilant "Yes."

"Had she been here before?"

The pawnbroker hesitated.

"I guess—yes," he replied.

"How many times?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Ah!" he said, "so many leddies! That's hard to say, meestair!"

Weatherby was angry, yet at the same time he understood the futility of venting his irritation upon the pawnbroker. He took up the case, thrust it under his arm and, turning abruptly, walked out of the shop. Stepping into his car again he started the engine, swung out into the street, and drove in the direction of his apartment.

This last escapade of his wife, although intrinsically not so serious nor so dishonouring as many another of hers, had produced more than the usual unpleasant reaction. Often, when he refused her money, she carried something out of the house—a piece of jewelry, a fine book, a picture, a bit of bric-a-brac, taking it to some place of this kind.

Generally he was unaware of these excursions, and she herself redeemed the pledges without his knowledge. Again, he would make an accidental discovery, yet say nothing, because he shrank from the unpleasant vulgarity of accusing her.

But now, in seizing upon his instruments, her act had acquired a special malignancy. It was almost symbolic, expressing the depth of her indifference to him, her calloused cheapness, her incredible degradation.

Thinking upon this now, almost unconscious of the streets through which he passed with only a mechanical alertness, a fabulous picture of earlier days returned to him to heighten the bitter vision of the present.

He remembered her as a young woman, as a girl. Incredible enough, she had been charming. But even then she had lacked any manifestation of responsibility—he remembered the words of her father, when, very serious and extraordinarily nervous, he had approached him, desiring his daughter.

The old fellow smiled, clapped young Weatherby on the back and shook his head dubiously.

"Yes, take her," he said. "Certainly. But be careful, lad. See if you can teach her not to spend so much money. *I* never could!"

At this moment, although introspective, he had no inclination to review those progressive steps by which the young girl, irresponsible, yet touching and alluring in her naïve disregard of sense, had declined into the woman whom he knew to-day. Only flashes of her declinations came to him. Old dis-

illusioning discoveries, until at last all illusions were gone, arose in his mind now, occupying it like a familiar and diabolic genius, until the moment when he shut off his motor and climbed out to enter the apartment house.

Someone nodded to him in the corridor, but, abstracted, he passed on to the elevator without returning the salutation.

II

He entered the apartment; it was very quiet; at first he thought that he was alone.

He went first to his bedroom to change his clothes and then there came to him the hissing noise of laboured respiration. Walking out into the living-room, he found his wife asleep in a chair.

She had been seated near the table and now half her body lay over this; her head was buried in her plump arms and her hair, loosened, covered the nape of her neck in unpleasant disorder. There was a bottle in front of her and a glass; the cause of her stupor was obvious and it was not an unfamiliar sight.

Weatherby stared a moment, frowning bitterly. But the actual sight of her vulgarities never stirred him as much as the contemplation of them. In a second he accepted the immediate fact almost stoically.

He crossed the room, bent over her and, turning her head around, looked down into her face with an almost professional interest.

Her eyes opened slightly, but she did not awaken; her breathing was difficult and slightly spasmodic, but there was nothing alarming in her condition.

Weatherby pushed his hands under her arms and pulled her up from the chair.

She muttered something, but he had no interest in distinguishing the words. Steadying himself a moment, he began to drag her across the floor, reaching the couch that stood against the wall.

Here he deposited her, as inanimate as a sack. Her feet dangled over the edge; he lifted them up to the couch.

She was still sleeping.

For a few seconds he stood looking down at her, studying her face with a puzzled expression. In this instant, since in her stupor she could not wound him with her speech, he could almost regard her as a being detached from his intimate concern, a problem, a question in cause and effect.

Even after these years of degradation her face still retained a certain charm. The complexion, mottled a little for the moment, was smooth even now, and suggested, like a ghost, the quality of its former freshness.

Her nose had kept the same fine modelling and her brow, from which the tousled hair fell back in careless waves, had the old, candid breadth. Only her lips displayed a striking change: they were loose, puffed and even in their present flexion, suggested an unlovely hardness.

Standing over her in this mood of contemplation, his mind was troubled with an uneasy lack of understanding, an uncertainty that seemed to thwart and mock him. There was still in this countenance, however much it had hardened and changed, the tangible suggestion of the girl of his delight. What had happened to her?

What curious infirmity within, eluding all his search and persuasion, had committed the theft of her abounding promise? In these questioning moments Dr. Weatherby almost doubted himself.

Perhaps the infirmity, whatever it had been, was half the result of something within his own nature. He had never quite considered her before with this touch of melancholy sympathy.

Perhaps she had wanted something, a speechless, uncomprehended something, an illusion he could not suggest, gifts he had not to bring.

For a second he tried to recall a clear memory of their earlier days, to see her as he had known her then, and divine what might have been her dreams. But he failed in the effort.

His mood changed, and a relief, more pertinent to the moment, entered his thoughts. To-night he felt glad that she was in this condition, since it precluded a more disagreeable alternative. There would be no argument between them to-night, no harshness, no loss of self-respect.

He glanced at her a moment longer and then left the room.

Returning to his bedroom he completed his toilet and, without looking at the woman again, passed through the hall and out of the flat. For the moment he was free and perhaps, for a time, he could be forgetful.

He descended in the elevator and, outside, stepped into his car. Then he drove to his club and had dinner.

He had already decided on the disposal of this evening, and now his mind turned to thoughts of his work, the considerations that always brought him oblivion. By the time he had finished dinner he was smiling, and passing out into the lounge he smiled at several of his acquaintances with a sense of well-being.

Once more he got into his car, this time driving rapidly. He stopped finally before another apartment house and entered with a familiar step.

The elevator boy nodded to him and he ascended. When he stepped out he walked rapidly down the length of the corridor and knocked at one of the doors. In a moment it was opened by a woman; he took her hand at once.

Her lips were curved cordially and she spoke in a small, agreeable voice.

"I wondered whether you were coming to-night," she said. "I couldn't remember whether you said you would or not—and, of course, you *never* think to 'phone."

She stood aside for him to enter; he laughed.

"You're mistaken, Helen," he expostulated. "I always think of the simple, necessary things, but at the wrong time. Usually they come to me when I have a patient lying on the operating table, for I'm less preoccupied then. It's surprising how mechanical one's skill gets! One can almost automatically let daylight into a chap's liver and lights while one's mind engages telephones and other similar matters."

They were walking through the hall now. Weatherby led the way into a small room illuminated only by a lamp shaded with a green, brocaded cover.

At his concluding words the woman raised her shoulders and shuddered extravagantly.

"Don't talk to me about such things!" she said. "Maybe I wouldn't respect you so much if you'd been a poet or something of the sort, but it would have been much decenter."

He turned now and confronted her, and for a moment they stood smiling at each other.

The woman, without achieving an indisputable loveliness, had nevertheless her charm. Her features were too pronounced, they lacked a desirable frailty—that appealing suggestion of evanescence that accompanies soft curves. But her eyes were beautiful, grey, appealing and very steady; her jetty hair was abundant, falling away on either side in rhythmic waves and gathered up, at the nape of her neck, into a coiled knot that seemed almost too heavy.

Weatherby held out his hands; she took them in her own.

"You look very appealing!" he cried. "I'm glad to be here with you!"

She continued to smile, but something of the frank curve of her lips was lost in the coming of another expression. It seemed almost as if some regret, some uncertainty, threw a shadow over her face.

"Yes," she answered. "It's good to have you here."

Her small voice was subdued, she dropped her hands, and rather abruptly crossed the room and seated herself on the davenport near the green shaded lamp. In the chromatic reflection her face looked pale.

For a few moments Weatherby stood where she had left him. The pleased and contented lines of his face hard-

ened, and two depressions cut parallel furrows between his eyes.

In her presence, and within the calm and decorous quiet of this room, he was reacting to the recollection of the stuporous woman recently abandoned at home. It was a familiar disquiet; the force of contrast frequently brought it to him.

At the same time there emerged into his feelings a measure of personal disparagement. He comprehended the fact, if not the nature, of an evident weakness within himself—a lack of daring, of initiative, a disastrous temporizing with conventions.

Across the room was one who might have given him, at any time in the past few years, all that he could crave in a woman—the sweetness of delicate response, the soothing charm of quiet. Yet they had never gone beyond ineffectual moments such as these: the occasional meetings, the few snatched hours that led to no decision; a suspension, an unfulfilment.

He glanced up; she was looking at him and their eyes met.

"What's the matter?" she asked.

Before he replied he permitted himself a second of bitterness. If *he* were without mastery, she should have supplied them both with courage! But her temperament was at one with his own; like him she was ineffectual.

He shrugged his shoulders and smiled a little.

"Thinking . . ." he replied.

"Don't think! Come here and sit beside me."

He obeyed and, as she made room for him, she touched him caressingly on the arm.

But, as if to hold off the spell of any immediate forgetfulness, he did not return her caress. Turning his face he met the affectionate look of her grey eyes with an expression that was almost harsh.

"Don't you ever plan?" he asked.

She understood; she tried to evade his question.

"Tell me all that you've been doing to-day; I've had a terribly dull day myself."

He was silent for a brief period, and then, in a somewhat monotonous voice, began what amounted almost to a soliloquy.

"She was in a stupor when I got home," he said. "Of course I wasn't shocked—it's too old a business for that; I was relieved, if anything. It gave me the opportunity to come to you. If she had been quarrelsome I might have lost all inclination to go anywhere. But, luckily—or unluckily, perhaps, who knows how anything will end?—she's had an interest of late. She has forgotten about me."

He paused and his companion met his gaze with an inquiring look.

"Yes," he went on; "no doubt you've guessed it. Another one. I don't know where she found him. A young man this time. She pawned one of my instrument cases to get money for him."

"How did you discover?" she murmured.

"An accident. But discovery is after all inevitable. She's grown so indifferent. She left one of his letters and her own answer, unsealed, on the table. I believe I was justified in reading them."

The woman nodded.

"He was asking her for money. In her reply she said she would try to bring it to him, and then she accused him of not loving her, of always wanting something. Not loving her! How incredible! It appalled me, in a way, to read that. It gave me an inexplicable sense of tragedy, her tragedy—even a touch of compassion. Can you understand that?"

The woman at his side touched his hand and her fingers lingered in his. He scarcely noticed this gesture.

"What sort of a mad obsession possessed her! Then she made love to him, called him extravagant, endearing names that were really terrifying to me as I read them. She spoke of him as her 'boy,' her 'darling little boy.' Can you picture the youth who receives that letter, who meets her, suffers all her

dreadful demonstrations? His depravity is more inexplicable than hers."

He ceased speaking and for some minutes there was no sound in the little room.

Then, little by little, his features relaxed.

He closed his fingers around the slender hand that lay in his own and, looking at his companion, he smiled.

"But I have you!" he said.

She leaned toward him and spontaneously their lips touched.

"Sooner or later," he declared, "I'm going to break from everything, take you away with me, get what's left to me out of life. I'm still sentimental enough to believe that there's some happiness for us!"

"Yes," she whispered.

At that moment he did not criticize her reply. Yet it might have served as the simple symbol of their relationship: the unfailing mutual agreement, the immediate sympathy and the inevitable evasion of action.

III

During the next few weeks he was very busy. His clinics were full and there was an unusual number of important and interesting operations.

In a measure he was content. As always, his work took him out of the world of undesiderate realities, gave him the temporary peace of forgetfulness. It was, after all, the one thing in which he believed, that would never betray him.

But at the same time he could not remain wholly ignorant of his wife's activities. She was engrossed in her new affair, but her carelessness kept him somewhat cognizant of her astonishing fervours. For one thing, she made constant demands for money. Rather than quarrel, he granted her desires.

Then, one evening, he made what appeared to be a significant discovery. His wife was not at home, but on the floor in her room there was a crumpled note, written in the scrawling, boyish hand he had seen before. This time it was harsh and brutal. He was tired of her, he wrote. He told her that he was going away and that it was useless for her to look for him. "I can't spend all my time with an old woman," he said.

Weatherby read this document with speculation and wonder. What had his wife done in the instant of *her* perusal? How had she acted?

For a second or two he was sympathetic. He did not understand her, nor all the complexity of her degradation, yet at the same time she was still capable of emotions. She still hoped—for incredible, debased things no doubt, but back of the perversity of her desires there was, without question, an intense, if pathological fervour. She could feel the shock of despair, the misery of defeated wantings.

At that instant he again questioned his own freedom from guilt. If she had failed him, disastrously, appallingly, then he had likewise failed her! Perhaps, had he been more discerning, more comprehending of her needs, life might have vouchsafed a different ending. But this was no solution. He shrugged his shoulders. There was no solution to anything. . . .

She did not return that night. This relieved him of a disagreeable foreboding, for he shrank from meeting her.

Sometimes she remained away for periods of days; he never knew where she went, nor with whom. No doubt, however intense her feelings in a single instant, she would be quick to forget.

When she returned it would be with some other monstrous interest.

He left the flat early in the morning, for a busy day was ahead of him. In the evening he planned to visit Helen, whom he had not seen for more than a week. The thought of meeting her again made all the hours in prospect take on an agreeable colour. At the same time a peculiar, vague determination stirred within him.

Perhaps they might come to some sort of a conclusion to-night!

Late in the afternoon, after the com-

pletion of an exceptionally successful piece of surgery, Weatherby was the recipient of a real ovation; after this he spent half an hour talking to the Chief Resident Physician at the hospital. Then he prepared to go home.

He had no thought of his wife. The day had passed very agreeably and the evening was still in prospect.

He entered his flat with the rare phenomenon of a smile.

It was entirely silent. He recalled his wife then and was relieved in his belief that she had not yet returned. Perhaps, when she did, he would be gone forever. . . .

He walked into the living-room.

Then he saw her sprawled on the floor.

She was lying near a chair, from which she had apparently fallen. The chair was overturned on its side.

She lay face upward. At her feet he caught the glitter of a metallic instrument; it was one of his scalpels.

Uttering an incoherent exclamation, he stopped abruptly. Her dress was covered with blood; a widening stain extended around her on the carpet and, observing these things, he saw in the same instant the cause.

Sitting in the chair she had taken his scalpel and passed it back and forth across her throat. The wounds were obscured by the blood that still pulsed from them.

For just a moment Weatherby was irrationally enraged. This was the culminating abomination, the last monstrous evidence of her folly!

Then his immobility passed and he sprang across the room and knelt at the prostrate figure.

He placed his hand on her chest; her heart was still beating and respiration, although enfeebled, continued.

He maintained his stooping posture only an instant. Then, arising swiftly he ran through the room, through the corridor and into his office. His instrument case was on his desk and he seized it, hurrying back.

When he stooped at her side again he saw the blood had almost ceased to flow and for a moment he believed that she was dead. An examination showed, however, that she still breathed. Nevertheless, the loss of blood had been tremendous and only an astonishingly swift operation could save her.

Now, a peculiar enthusiasm came into his face. He had lost all thought of her identity; she was only the object of his immediate skill. It was a simple case, but never had one been more urgent. His eyes widened, darted about him and glowed with his excitement. He opened the bag and tumbled out the instruments.

Separating the wounds, he made a swift examination. Luckily, the carotids were unsevered. But she had made a clean job of the thyroid veins and arteries, together with the anterior and external jugulars. The gashes extended to the sternomastoid muscles. . . .

With an astonishing precision he began clipping on the artery clamps. Then, with deft fingers, he made the ligation of the severed vessels. One by one he released the clamps, dropping them on the floor. Finally, taking up a needle, he sutured the wounds.

Now he glanced at her face. Her pallor was intense; the eyes were closed, the mouth hung open and there was no sign of respiration. He bent down and listened.

The heart was still beating!

Without pausing for the formality of sterilization, he bared her arm and thrust an injection needle under her skin, pushing down the plunger.

Then, still kneeling, he waited.

Little by little he saw her chest take up the visible rhythm of inspiration and expiration. Now he felt sure that she would live.

He arose. Although he daily did things more difficult, he had never worked with greater swiftness, under a larger urgency, nor with better deftness. There was an expression of exaltation in his face like that which might come from the knowledge of a significant victory. For some seconds

he stood thus, motionless, breathing deeply.

And then, gazing down upon her face, the full understanding of her identity swept like a wave over his consciousness. She was his wife, the woman of his degradation and defeat. She had been dying—and he had saved her.

In that dreadful second he saw the other woman, the one of his desire. He remembered the half resolves that had intrigued him throughout the day. But these resolutions returned to him now in the bitter light of a critical understanding. They would never seize their own happiness; each was too faltering for that. They would go on through weeks, through months, in ineffectual wanting. Only the release through some other agency would give them their desire.

He stared, in grim understanding, at the prostrate form on the floor. The woman there breathed gently now; there was even a relenting of her death-mask pallor.

She herself had offered that necessary release—and he had thwarted her. A faintness that came with the understanding of his final defeat made him stagger back against the table.

His enthusiasm, his pride in his skill—the skill that heretofore had seemed the only unfailing mercy of his life—had betrayed him.

CERTAINTY

By Norvel Henry

SHE tried all the expedients known to her for finding out whether he was still alive. She listened for his heart beat, stuck a pin in his flesh. Then she placed a mirror to his lips. Slight moisture gathered on it. The reaction stunned for the moment. Then she became herself again and worked quickly. She held the pillow over his face for fifteen minutes more.

THE woman who can love two men at the same time can teach the devil things that he does not know.

THE most attractive face that a woman looks into is the one that shows it is looking into attractiveness.

HALF the women are married to the wrong men. The rest are about to be married to the wrong men.

SISTERHOOD

By Joseph Upper

I

CAROLINE closed the novel she had been reading and looked out wearily at the half-grown islands that sprawled on the still surface of the lake. The late afternoon sun passed a fatherly hand over the heads of the distant mountains. Caroline sighed.

She knew that it would not be long now until the shadows would take possession of the trails through the woods from which vantage-point they would creep slowly in towards the hotel. Then dinner would be served and soon after that she would retire to her room to spend an eventless evening.

Caroline had come to The Peaks because her sister Laura recommended it. Caroline always went to places because someone recommended them. Her sister had seen a great deal of The Peaks the preceding summer. Agnew had been there the entire season.

When Caroline thought of Agnew Burchard she was conscious of a divided emotion. At first there was only a deep sympathy. Caroline repeatedly told herself that that was *all* there was; but she knew it was not true. Slowly, almost imperceptibly, but certainly too, there crept into that sympathy a feeling of dissatisfaction which exploded tiny depth-bombs in the sea of Caroline's subconscious self. After the explosion there shot up thin streams of green jealousy which disturbed Caroline because she could not understand them. She could not have even given them a name. Vaguely she knew that there was something disturbing in the thought of Agnew Burchard, and she was quite certain that there ought not to be anything of the sort. Beyond that meagre explanation she could not have gone.

Caroline knew that if Agnew had lived he would have married Laura. Laura had spent week-end after week-end at The Peaks the summer before while Agnew was there making a last fight to regain his failing health. Agnew's people had telegraphed for Laura when his condition finally became acute. Laura had been with him when he died. She had returned after the funeral quiet and still and dignified, and had gone on with her ordinary activity as though nothing had happened. Not even to her sister had she made any sign, betrayed any grief, or offered any confidence. And Caroline had timidly put off her shoes from off her feet and acknowledged the place whereon she stood to be holy ground.

Since then Laura had been something other than a sister. She had drawn about her the majestic robes of melancholy romance and become associated with that peculiar isolation which so often seems to characterize the famous. A great actress, a noted author, a distinguished orator, could not have inspired more awe in Caroline than did the unfortunate Laura, who had been loved, engaged, almost married, and had come only a little short of widowhood.

Nothing of the sort had happened to Caroline; she knew that it never would. The days of her eligibility were passed. She would be an old maid. Of course, there was no actual difference between her and Laura in that respect. Laura

was also unmarried, would also be an old maid. But to Laura there might always come the consolation of knowing that it might have been otherwise; more, that it certainly would have been otherwise but for the ruthless intervention of circumstance. Laura had been robbed of much—but she had been robbed. The grim highwayman had passed by Caroline. She had nothing for him to seize. His very severity to her sister had been sweetened with romance. His indifference to Caroline had been a reproach.

Here, here, in the shadow of these very mountains, under these same towering pines, yes, even on this same hotel verandah, Laura had acquired the richest prize of life, and though it had been rudely snatched from her grasp, nothing, not all the colourless, weary years ahead, could alter the fact that it had been hers.

Caroline gazed out across the motionless lake with wistful eyes. She wished that she had not come to The Peaks.

II

Dinner at The Peaks was a loquacious affair. Half the crowd were eager to tell of their day's sport, the rides they had taken, the fish they had caught, the mountain they had climbed. Most of the other half, the youngest ones, were beginning to bubble with that senseless merriment which precedes a gay evening. The dance-hall awaited them, moonlight and romance were to be theirs, and their spirits rose in anticipation. Only the invalids, who were often too miserable for gaiety, and a handful of people like Caroline, who were too staid for it, remained aloof, wrapped in assumed indifference.

Caroline resented the atmosphere. She couldn't climb mountains, so disliked the braggarts. She was too old for romance, so pretended to disapprove of the lovers. The invalids reminded her of Agnew, and created a disagreeable impression; and she had little use for those who were unfortunate enough to be like herself.

Dinner over, she drifted again to the verandah. The halls echoed with the laughter of young life. She wished she were home. Over the lake a half-moon threw handfuls of liquid silver. The old pines gossiped with a passing breeze.

Black and white figures flitted down the path to the dance pavilion. Sprightly music, strangely at variance with the quiet sylvan setting, raced out over the lake and flung back laughing echoes.

A complacent matron seated herself at Caroline's elbow. Caroline was certain she had not seen the woman before, yet she had the air of one long familiar with her surroundings.

"Isn't it beautiful?" she breathed.

Caroline smiled assent.

"I just arrived this afternoon," confided the woman. "The place looks just as it did. I was here nearly all summer last year, and—O just look at that couple. Aren't they romance personified!"

Caroline's eyes followed the flash of diamonds that lent force to the woman's slight gesture. Something within her felt hard and vindictive.

"They are the ones who enjoy this place," continued the other, "but they are not the ones who need it most. That is the only disturbing thing about coming here. There are so many sick. It was only a few days ago that I learned of the death last fall of a young man whom I became acquainted with here in the summer. It certainly was too bad. I think he knew that it was coming, too, poor fellow. I said when I left, 'Well, Mr. Burchard, I suppose I'll see you up here again next summer?' And he only smiled just as though he knew. O, it was pitiful!"

At the sound of Agnew's name Caroline had been on the point of revealing her knowledge of the case, but some sudden inhibition seized her. Scarcely knowing why, she waited in sympathetic silence for the older woman to continue.

"There was a young woman who

used to come to see him. She came up nearly every week, and they used to walk in the moonlight just as these young folks are doing now. O dear me, life is strange, isn't it? She was very faithful to him, poor girl."

"They were—engaged?"

Caroline thought she was asking the question out of courtesy, and could not understand why she hung so eagerly on the woman's answer.

"Oh dear no. I guess everyone thought so. Everyone who spoke to me about them did, and I never pretended to know differently. No, we had a long talk one afternoon, and he told me about her. She was an unfortunate girl. Her people had brought her up very strictly and she had hardly ever had any good times. He began to pay her some attention out of sympathy for her situation. He took her about some and saw that she had a little gaiety. It wasn't until his health began to fail that he realized how seriously she had taken everything. She was very good to him then. I think he was very grateful to her, but he didn't love her you know. She wasn't the sort of girl he would ever have chosen to marry. I suppose she believes that she would have been his wife if he had lived. Life is strange, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Caroline. "Yes, it *is*—very strange."

III

When she reached her room, Caroline began to pack. She had made up her mind to leave in the morning. It was not certain that the woman down on the verandah had known Laura's name, but if she had it might be embarrassing when she subsequently discovered Caroline's. Besides, Caroline wanted to go home. The Peaks was not the place for her. It was for sick people and lovers, or elderly gossips like the woman she had just left. It was no place for the woman whose lifelong dream of romance was being slowly but certainly obliterated by the mists of approaching middle-age.

Sitting down by the window, Caroline looked out through the dark pine branches to the moonlit waves swaying in rhythm with the lively music from the dance pavilion. She felt suddenly a great longing for her sister.

It was different now. She realized that it always would be different. It wasn't holy ground any longer. Laura, the object of distant admiration, had been changed into Laura, the object of deep pity. Caroline knew now that she had been guilty of jealousy. She had envied Laura her romantic position. It had come between them. Fate had seemed to strangely favour Laura and to scorn *her*. Now everything was different. Fate had tricked Laura but had left *her* free. Of the two she was superior. While her dreams were unfulfilled, she cherished no delusions.

She rose and resumed her preparations for departure. She felt more at peace with herself and with life than she had for a long time. To Laura everything would always be the same, Laura would never know. But Laura was weaker than she. Laura needed her. She would go back in the morning.

An ugly woman is an epigram at the expense of her whole sex.

THE GAMBLER

By Roger Andrews

HE could not stand it any longer. He felt that he must have it over at last. With mixed feelings he went to her house. He was going to propose to her. He knew the odds against him. He realized that the chances were ten to one that she would not accept him. That was why he was going to propose.

SONG

By Glenn Ward Dresbach

WHICH shall I pity most to-day
Of olden April loves?
The one I saw go out to feed
A flock of snowy doves
Beyond her lonely garden-place,
With but lost Aprils in her face?

Or shall I pity most the one
I saw where crowds went by
With flash of gems upon her breast
And winter in her eye,
And Master Poodle walking, proud
In place of Love, through April's crowd?

Or shall I pity most the dear
Strange one who went with Death,
To lose the earth-born raptures gone
As in a rose's breath? . . .
That body gone to dust again
Answers with violets the rain!

THE LITTLE TICKET COLLECTOR

By T. E. Mount

SHE was clothed entirely, so far as one could see, in some sort of huge ulster or cloak of a dirty brown colour and sadly faded and frayed. Her shoes were of that nondescript sort which is apparently indigenous to shop girls and others who are much on their feet—of soft black leather, dull and shapeless and comfortable. All day she sat or stood at the machine, whose insatiable mouth never tired of swallowing tickets, and watched the people hurry by to catch the trains. No one noticed her.

They were all too much in a hurry, and besides in her brown coat—like those birds who change their brilliant-coloured coats at some seasons of the year to soft and neutral tints for better protection—she seemed to blend into and become part of the drab platform which stood ever behind her like a floor of wintry grass which would never grow green with Spring.

But she saw many people of many sorts and her eyes had become keen in the little signs which whisper their tales of occupations and habits. This young man, for instance, was different. For one thing he seemed actually happy, and he whistled softly to himself with a gay light in his eye as he walked up and down the platform waiting for his train. By this she knew he was new to New York, for your hardened denizen of the city takes his happy moments seriously and does not unburden himself by whistling happy little tunes on the platform of the "L." Moreover, though he may very well be happy, he is never gay. He wouldn't know how to be if he wanted to.

The little ticket collector watched the young man and she thought that he was very handsome. Her heart jumped and her smile was shy when she saw that he had come over and meant to ask her a question.

"There are so many trains," he said. "I want to get to Columbus Avenue and Seventy-ninth Street."

"You take the Harlem train and get off at Eighty-first Street; then walk back two blocks," she found herself answering him in quite a businesslike way.

He thanked her and turned away.

When he had gone she began to think of her life, of what it had been and of what it might yet be if she took any one of the various roads which are ever open to a woman.

She was the daughter of a carpenter who had had difficulty in making his very liberal wages suffice for a family of six, and the customary Saturday night revel. Saturday nights were his reward for working every day with his hands without any real hope of arriving at a stage of existence in which he would do otherwise than work hard with his hands each week after a Saturday night. He had been an unreflective man and he did not save or carry insurance, but he was not a shirker, and, having married casually, he accepted the inevitable offspring of that marriage philosophically and made an honest attempt to support and educate them. Being an unreflective man, he died without an estate, and his four daughters supported their mother.

This little ticket collector was the eldest of the four, and she had had little time for romantic affairs. Besides, she was not of the sort that is attractive to men, being neither pretty nor possessed

of those little graces and artifices which enable the unbeautiful of the sex to engage in the contest for love and a flat to care for. She had had one suitor, to be sure, but she had not liked him even enough to consider his somewhat doubtful qualities as a provider.

Now her mother was dead and she had a little more money to spend on herself, but life had resolved itself into a hopeless round of days behind that greedy ticket machine and lustreless nights in her little skylight room. She was twenty-five and she wondered if fifty was to find her behind that rapacious machine, unnoticed, watching the faces of the people who hurried past her, or gazing at the high stars from the little iron bed of some other skylight room.

Men, she reflected, sometimes looked at her with glances not wholly impersonal, but these men were usually gross of feature and evil of eye, such as seemed to see in a woman but one possibility and therefore overlooked her general unattractiveness.

From these men she shrank as a house-reared kitten might shrink from the filth and corruption of a back-street gutter.

And suddenly she was possessed of a wish that she had jumped up and held on to that young man with the clean face and the gay smile and begged him to share some little bit of his happiness with her. But the young man had gone and she sat very still, with queer desperate thoughts running through her head, and for a long time she did not know whether the people dropped their tickets into the machine or not.

But the young man in question continued to be happy, for he did not know of the thoughts in the mind of the ticket collector and he had just got a new job which made it possible for the Girl and himself to be married.

He had only been in New York a few months and the days had seemed very long. That morning he had stolen an hour of the firm's time to write to his longed-for betrothed. Now it was merely a question of a week or so until she would meet him in New York, accompanied doubtless by solicitous parents, to be married. His happiness was therefore excusable.

But for some reason, as he took his seat in the car, he thought of the little ticket collector and remembered the wistful look in her eyes which belied the cool, brisk tones of her answer to his question. It occurred to him that she might not be very happy, sitting all day watching the tickets disappear into her machine.

"Hell of a job," he commented to himself.

He wondered what such girls did for amusement. Come to that, he hadn't done much in the way of amusement himself these last few months, and here he was on his lucky day without anyone to help him celebrate.

It occurred to him that the girl at the ticket machine would probably be very glad to help. The thought grew on him, and a moment later he was off and waiting for a down-town train. Certainly she was homely enough, so that even his girl wouldn't mind, he reflected.

The little ticket collector's heart jumped when she saw him coming up the steps and began to beat so fast that it seemed as though she could scarcely get her breath.

When he leaned over and told her that he hoped she wouldn't think he was fresh, that he was wishing for someone to celebrate with him that evening because he had just got a new job, and that she had looked as though she might be a little lonesome, too, and so forth and so forth, the ticket collector managed to say breathlessly that she would meet him in the lobby of the theatre, and managed not to add "or anywhere else on earth."

So the young man went whistling away while she sat amidst whirling balls of fire that hid the drab platform and whisked her away to long rows of beautiful theatre lobbies, all of which contained a most wonderful-looking young man with the gayest of smiles on his face.

II

THAT evening she hurried home from work so as to be the first to use the boarding-house bathtub, for some half-realized, half-formed purpose urged her to make herself very clean, as a bride does on the day of her wedding.

After bathing she dressed herself with tremulous care and, scarcely stopping to eat the greasy evening meal of the boarding-house, hurried to the theatre. She did not intend to be late on this evening of evenings.

At the theatre she thrilled to the occasional touch of his elbow and thought little or nothing of the play. But she saw that the women in the cast wore beautiful soft clothes and even the oldest and ugliest of them seemed well-fed and plump enough.

After the play the young man had a reckless moment and suggested that they go to a cabaret and have supper. Here the ticket collector saw more women, all apparently finely dressed and laughing merrily with their men companions. She knew by report, and by that sixth sense which all women possess, what sort they were.

Some of them had hard lines in their faces, but they were usually the older ones. She reflected that the lines in their faces were no harder and their eyes no more hopeless than those of old Mrs. Simpson, who had been deserted by her husband and who had lived in solitary virtue ever since, supporting herself by taking in washing; nor than those of that Mrs. Elkins who spent her time sewing for other people and protecting herself and her children from the drunken assaults of Elkins on the occasions of his infrequent visits to his family. Nor did she see anyone who looked half so wicked and grasping as that Italian woman whose husband kept the corner store or as the hard-faced, faithful wife of old Sol, the pawnbroker, who wore so many diamonds and seemed always to be hoping that Sol would be able to wring another out of some poor person who owed him money.

She noticed also that, although not all of these women looked happy even in the forced gaiety of the cabaret, yet almost without exception they looked as if they had had enough to eat, and no one looked at all like poor little Miss Etheridge, who was so scrawny and thin and always so afraid of being taken sick and losing her work.

A sudden resolve came to her and when she looked again at her young man the little light which had flickered and lain fallow in her eyes ever since he had first spoken to her looked boldly out as if it had at last made up its mind to stay.

The young man did not notice it. He was intrigued with the cabaret, an event not very frequent in his own hard-working life.

He was inspired to order a cocktail, humorously offering one to her. She accepted without hesitation. It was her first, and she disliked the taste, so she swallowed it all at once in order to get rid of it. The warm, tingling sensation which followed delighted her and in that glow the little light in her eyes grew stronger.

She felt suddenly as though she had grown somewhat larger, had expanded so that the little hollows in her neck had filled out and her bodice fitted a little more closely. A glance in the big mirror behind her showed that her eyes were bright and her cheeks held a becoming flush—almost as though she had painted like the women around her.

She stared straight before her and scarcely heard, or heard only through a haze, her companion's comments on the cabaret show which was just commencing. That warm, tingling sensation still ran through her veins and she seemed all at once to be possessed of a languorous grace. Her body felt as though it were all full of soft curves. She wanted to go out and dance easily and swiftly with the scantily clad dancer who held the floor.

But her companion bethought himself of his new job and the necessity of a clear head for the morrow and took her off.

Going to her home on the elevated she was still silent, for she was thinking of the morning and the drab platform and the greedy mouth of her ticket machine and of the many other to-morrows which would follow. She shivered slightly.

"Cold?" he asked.

She answered "Yes," and as they got off the cars she put her arm through his and walked quite close to him. It made him a little uncomfortable. He had not told her of The Girl and he wanted to be loyal. He thought how fine it would be when he and She could walk home thus, she on his arm, to their apartment.

Arrived at her boarding-house they stood for a moment in the darkness of the doorway while the ticket collector pretended to try to get the key in the lock. The young man waited cheerfully for a moment and then suggested that he might be able to manage it better than she.

Seeing that he had every intention of opening the door for her and leaving her with merely a word of good-night, she was forced to abandon this little subterfuge. She meant to be very diplomatic about making him stay, but suddenly the thought of the morning, and the nearness of his smile, and that little tingly feeling that had been around her heart all the evening, surged up in her so that she came close to him and catching him by the lapels of his coat whispered up to him in a little choky voice, "Don't go and leave me now—I-I want you to stay—a-a long time—I-I—"

Then in a burst of desperation as she felt him drawing back from her, "Oh, take me away from this place! Please, please! I want to go away with you!"

The young man was amazed. He had not counted on this. His heart skipped a beat and something savage took possession of him so that he felt very much like a beast who finds his kill unexpectedly helpless before him and hesitates a moment, delighting in its very helplessness, before he strikes. But he fought this feeling down and pretended to misunderstand, saying, "There, there, you're only a little frightened. You'll be all right in a moment."

She came closer to him still and made it so plain that he could not fail to understand, and because of his girl and the queer savage feeling in his throat he broke away from her and hurried down the street with his chin on his breast. He thought of his love and he felt soiled.

When he had gone the little ticket collector leaned against the door and sobbed. Later she went upstairs and lay in her little bed, looking at the stars which seemed to form for her the image of that insatiable machine of the morrow which would swallow the tickets so greedily, and her heart was hot and bitter.

WOMEN cease to be interesting when they become supremely happy or supremely unhappy.

MARRIAGE simply makes it more difficult for a woman to meet congenial company.

LAZARE

By Charles Dornier

VERS le milieu de septembre commencent déjà les veillées. Sous la cheminée haute comme un porche, devant les chenets anciens, sous les lourds jambons non séparés de leurs quartiers, sous les cordons de saucisses que fument les feux odorants du genévrier, jeunes et vieux font cercle, les uns teillant le chanvre, les autres *défouillant* les épis d'or allongés du maïs. Vers la fin de la soirée, quand les garçons sont las de plaisanter et de taquiner les filles, ils se taisent et écoutent les histoires du vieux temps que leur conte un menton branlant d'aïeule, ou le geste et la voix tremblotants de quelque vieux.

Un soir, le père Bousson, dit Le Beau, nous ânonna cette aventure de l'autre siècle.

"Oui, mon père à moi, il est mort deux fois, et deux fois il a été enterré. Vous riez? . . . mais c'est la vérité, aussi vrai que je suis là et que je m'appelle Bousson. Ça se passait en 1814, pendant l'invasion des alliés. Par chez nous, arrivaient les Autrichiens, à vrai dire de toutes les races, des Hongrois, des Croates, je ne sais plus quoi encore. Ils dévalaient, plus nombreux que les sauterelles, des bois et des combes, des communaux et des routes. Ils disaient comme ça, en leur jargon, qu'ils allaient reprendre à Napoléon, l'*ogre*, la fille de leur empereur, la Marie Louise, et toujours ces mots revenaient, menaçants, dans leurs bouches: "Marie Antoinette, *capout!* Napoléon, *capout!*" voulant signifier que, puisqu'on avait décapité leur reine, il leur fallait la tête de notre Empereur.

"Mais on se pensait en dedans de soi: "C'est pas encore vous qui le prendrez, et s'il vous a laissé venir jusqu'ici, en France, Autrichiens, Prussiens, Russes, c'est qu'il veut vous battre ensemble, là où il sait, et faire de vous tous une fameuse salade à la sauce qu'il connaît, assaisonnée de poudre et de biscaïens!" Hélas! l'Empereur avait, paraît-il, perdu son étoile dans la nuit de la Russie et ses meilleurs soldats au passage de la "Belle Résina," une rivière qui charriait, en guise de bateaux, une flotte énorme de glaçons. . . .

"Ce furent des temps bien durs. Dans les villages, il ne restait que les tout jeunes et les vieux. La grande guerre prenait, tous les ans, depuis quinze ans, les meilleurs. — Les réquisitions pleuvaient sur les présents. Les Autrichiens, songeant à faire le siège de Besançon, faisaient conduire leurs convois d'obus par les gens. Les convois partaient généralement de nuit, et eux, autant pour décharger leur colère que leurs bêtes, en passant sur le pont de Bouclans, sournoisement faisaient rouler une demi-douzaine de ces obus dans le ravin, même qu'après la guerre, de tous les villages on courait en faire des voitures, et comme c'était de la fameuse fonte, à la forge de la Grâce-Dieu on les prenait au prix fort, ou on leur fondait des chenets, des fourneaux, si bien qu'aujourd'hui, dans nos montagnes, plus d'un, sans savoir, se chauffe encore avec des boulets autrichiens.

"Mon père, donc, à cette époque, avait dans les seize ans, mais on lui en aurait donné vingt; un fier gars, noir de cheveux, d'yeux, et d'une moustache naissante qu'il troussait fièrement, surtout pour aller voir sa *blonde*, Jeanne, la fille aux Saunier, des voisins qui n'étaient séparés de chez nous que par

la longueur des deux enclos. Or, pendant les mois d'invasion, bien que les écuries et les granges, comme les rues, fussent pleines de ces damnés *Kaiserliks*, il allait néanmoins à la veillée chez sa prétendue.

"Un soir, comme ils étaient tous réunis, ainsi que nous maintenant, sous le manteau de la cheminée, mon père près de sa Jeanne, un de ces Croates, un hussard, entre ivre dans le *poële*, et, traînant son sabre, insultant et jurant, en son jargon mi-français mi-allemand, s'en vient prendre le menton de la Jeanne, balbutiant : "Belle *fraülen*, moi l'aimer, et l'emmener." Mon ancien, prompt comme la foudre, s'élance, et, malgré les efforts du vieux père, les appels éplorés des femmes, saute sur mon Croate, le renverse d'une poussée si furieuse contre la porte que l'autre l'enfonce à moitié, vient buter de son crâne la pierre du seuil et reste assommé du coup.

"Vous voyez le drame, et leur angoisse terrible à tous. C'était la fusillade pour sûr ! Car, comment se débarrasser de ce colis gênant ?

"Mais, dans ces temps-là, plus que maintenant, les gens d'ici étaient quelque peu contrebandiers, et mon père avait autant de tours en son sac que de force dans ses muscles. Il commence à se déshabiller et commande aux femmes d'en faire autant à l'Autrichien. Il revêt l'uniforme du mort, tandis qu'on affuble celui-ci des habits paysans, et par les vergers, sans bruit, ils emportent le cadavre chez nos grands-parents, à qui ils expliquent l'affaire, et l'étendent sur le lit de mon père. L'Autrichien avait la même taille et presque la même physionomie que lui. Les cheveux et la barbe seuls étaient blonds, mais, avec un peu de cirage, ils en firent un noiraud comme mon père.

"Bref, la comédie fut jouée, et bien jouée jusqu-au bout. Quand mon père eut décampé par les vergers, gagnant les bois, mes grands-parents se mettent à pousser les hauts cris, des sanglots, ameutant les voisins, à qui ils expliquent que leur Jean vient de mourir là, tout d'un coup, comme d'une attaque.

"Il y eut bien enquête, surtout quand le kaiserlik fut porté absent. Mais, que voulez-vous ? Le cadavre était bien maquillé, la douleur des parents si évidente, comment les soupçonner ? Dans l'autre maison, où le kaiserlik était cantonné, il n'y avait qu'un vieil infirme, une vieille femme et une toute jeune fille. De plus, l'autre était porté comme ivrogne, pillard et paillard. On chercha d'un autre côté, et on ne trouva rien, puisqu'il fut enterré, sous le nom de mon père. Tout le village assista à l'enterrement, et encore à l'offertoire, le dimanche suivant. Même, pour mieux jouer leur rôle, mes grands-parents lui firent dire des messes.

"Quant à mon, père, tout le temps de l'invasion il resta dans les bois de la Grand'Combe, chez des charbonniers de nos amis, bien en sûreté. Mais, quand il revint pour épouser sa Jeanne, il eut des difficultés à légaliser la chose. Il fallut un jugemet, à Besançon, qui nous coûta plus cher encore que l'enterrement et les messes. Et voilà pourquoi il porta jusqu'à la fin le sobriquet de Lazare, puisque, comme lui, après sa mort, il ressuscita."

HANDSOME MEN

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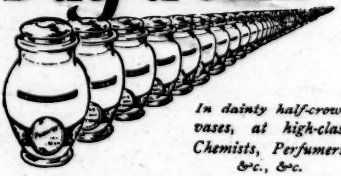

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ABOUT FASHIONS AND OTHER THINGS

By Various Hands

From the sartorial view-point the dead season is upon us, and the *couturières* (unlike many of the spring flowers and shrubs) are not to be deceived by a few days' warmth and sunshine, and are still jealously guarding their spring-time secrets. Nevertheless, a few whispers have escaped from the bolted and barred doors of Paris, and are eagerly seized upon by those who like to be well in advance of fashion. Rumour has it that there is to be an attempt to bring back the pleated skirt, the very tiniest of pleats being used, and this is a conceit that many of us hope has come to stay, as it is almost universally becoming. A very typical little frock showing this effect has just been made for the Riviera. The skirt was of yellow Kasha closely pleated, while over this was worn a yellow jumper-blouse of brilliant satin-ciré daintily embroidered in gold thread. Yellow, by the way, is the colour of the moment, and lucky is the woman to whom it is becoming.

It is greatly in request for lingerie as well, and makes the most adorable little "sets" when edged with fine filet lace, and threaded with ribbons to match the frock. Double ninon is a very attractive material for nightgowns and camisoles. We have been without it for many a long day, and are only too glad to welcome it back. It has many advantages: firstly it takes up the minimum of space in one's trunk, and secondly, it requires very little trimming—indeed, a plain picot edge is far the most effective and practical, and a coloured ribbon drawn through large eyelet-holes is all that it requires to finish it; while its washing is the simplest affair, and can be done very easily at home—a great advantage in these labourless days.

A peach-coloured nightgown, or one of rich Oriental terra-cotta, cut on loose voluminous lines and threaded with blue or gold ribbons, is very attractive indeed. The *dessous* is always a fascinating subject, and yet so many Englishwomen fail to realize its importance, or that the cut of what is beneath can make or mar a whole costume, no matter how expensive or beautiful that costume may be. One great problem has been how to keep warm in the evening and yet be in the fashion. Whatever is worn beneath one's frock is apt to slip downward and leave the wearer feeling chilly, to say the least of it. It is curious that a woman can remain perfectly warm with low décolletage and exposed back if she has plenty of "woolies" beneath it, and one little lady has solved the problem by having long chemise-vests loosely knitted in either thick jumper silk or thick wool, and, with small safety-pins, fastening on long shoulder-straps made of pearl beads or narrow gold or silver ribbon. These straps do not offend the eye and answer the purpose admirably. The tops of the vests are finished off with a small blanket stitch through which a narrow gold ribbon can be threaded and tied. A lace top was not found satisfactory as it was rather too cold. Women are still very *décolletée* at night, but as unreasonable as of yore; the ultra-smart are wearing waistcoats buttoned right up to the neck in the daytime under their tailor-mades.

The long loose coat is more beloved than ever, and is a godsend when worn over the little frock of satin and serge or woven silk. Some of the best houses are already showing a redingote for the spring. The tops of these coats are beautifully tailored and semi-fitting, and some have highwaymen's collars attached, trimmed with contrasting shade of duvetyn. Most of them are still distinctly "hippy," though it is a question whether this "hippiness" has come to stay. Some say not, that it is not a graceful line, and the masculine eye is not enthralled thereby, and they prophesy an early return to the slim, straight outline, for day wear at any rate; while the draperies, which have surely come to stay, are not to be in

MIMOSA discourses on NATURAL BEAUTY

- and how to obtain it. -

To-day every woman of taste and refinement avoids the use of cosmetics or made-up toilet preparations which give an artificial appearance. The fresh, natural complexion that few women have, and every woman desires, is best obtained by use of original ingredients already at hand or which can be obtained from any reliable chemist. My advice is to avoid the use of most made-up face creams, rouge, and beautifying preparations. They are usually obvious and often disappointing. If you will get only the proper original ingredients, you will be satisfied with the result. Insist on having what you ask for. If your chemist does not happen to have it in stock, he can immediately get it for you.

Good Shampoo Important.—The hair should be allowed to breathe, and the greasy film around each strand must be removed with a mild non-alkaline shampoo. Soaps should be tabooed. The very best solution for the purpose can be made by dissolving a teaspoonful of stallax granules in a cup of hot water. It stimulates the scalp to healthy action, and at the same time leaves the hair in that soft, fluffy condition so much admired. Any chemist can supply you with an original packet of stallax, sufficient to make twenty-five or thirty shampoos.

Magic for Superfluous Hair.—It is astounding the number of women who suffer from unsightly growths of hair on the face, and it will come as a piece of good news to know that there is a simple substance known as powdered pheminol which will remove it immediately and permanently. Mix a small quantity into a thin paste with a little water, and apply to the objectionable growths. In two minutes all trace of the hair will have entirely vanished, and your skin will be as soft and smooth as a child's.

To have Smooth, White Skin all through the Winter.—Does your skin chap or roughen easily, or become unduly red or blotchy? Let me tell you a quick and easy way to overcome the trouble and keep your complexion beautifully white, smooth, and soft. Just get some ordinary mercolised wax at the chemists, and use a little before retiring as you would use cold cream. The wax, through some peculiar action, flecks off the rough discoloured or blemished skin. The worn out cuticle comes off just like dandruff on a diseased scalp only in almost invisible particles. Mercolised wax simply hastens Nature's work, which is the rational and proper way to attain a perfect complexion, so much sought after, but very seldom seen. The process is perfectly simple and quite harmless.

For Dry, Irritating and Dandruffy Scalps.—Nothing can compare with the following recipe for the above condition, and until you have rectified any trouble in this direction, it is useless to expect the hair to grow healthy and vigorous. Mix a package of boranium with ½ pint of bay rum, shake the bottle well and allow to stand for 30 minutes, then add ½ pint cold water and strain. This simple home remedy will stimulate the hair roots to their normal functions, resulting in a beautiful growth of new hair.

Rouge Not Necessary.—If you must add a little colour to the cheeks, please do not use rouge; it is always so painfully obvious that women of refinement have now discarded it for ever. There is a little known substance called colliandum obtainable at most chemists which can be used in its place. It gives a perfectly natural tint and defies the closest scrutiny, besides having the undoubted advantage of not rubbing off.

The Powder Puff Passes.—A persistently shiny nose, or a dull lifeless complexion, drives many a woman to cosmetics and consequent despair. And all the time a simple remedy lies at hand in the home. Get from your chemist about an ounce of cleminite, and add sufficient water to dissolve it. A little of this simple lotion is Nature's own beautifier. It is very good for the skin, and instantly gives the complexion a soft, velvety, youthful bloom that any woman might envy. It lasts all day or evening, renders powdering entirely unnecessary, and absolutely defies detection.

Miscellaneous Hints.—For lips inclined to be rough or harsh use a soft stick of prolactum.

An ideal complexion soap is one called pilenta. It contains no free alkali and is as near neutrality as science can make it.

To make the eyelashes grow long, dark and curling, massage them gently with mennaline. It is quite a harmless substance and will not injure the eyes.

any way exaggerated. But it is a case of *qui vivra verra* at this season. One would-be prophet declares that flounces will have their day. They have been fairly *en evidence* lately, and are very becoming to many, so that there is quite a chance that she may be right. One thing is certain, and that is that fashions are in the melting-pot at present. Many styles will be offered to us, but only a few will be chosen, and let us hope that good sense and good taste will triumph.

The straight chemise-frock will still be with us, according to one of our leading lights, and this will be good news to many.

Coiffures are altering rapidly, and the girl with the low forehead and classical features is to be envied, for the latest craze is to brush the hair straight back from the middle of the forehead, leaving only one curl to soften the sudden change, while the ears are only half hidden by a soft lock of hair on either side. It is drawn into a chignon at the back rather high, and a smooth, glossy look is much sought after. In the evening a small wreath or string of pearls with a tassel to one side is all that is required. Large head-dresses have had their day, and the theatre-goer is duly thankful. One of the most beautiful seen lately was an old French ornament worn as a bandeau. It had a very dainty design of alternate emeralds and diamonds, and was worn by a very beautiful woman with wavy fair hair. A few advance season straw hats have already appeared. So far these are not very pretty or attractive in any way. The straws are mostly rough and lumpy, and look rather clumsy. The Spanish toreador is quite the newest shape, with a red rose or a bunch of ribbons at one side hiding the ear, and falling almost over the cheek.

THE CONTOUR OF YOUTH

During the long hours of sleep the muscles become relaxed, and the face falls out of shape unless supported. To preserve a youthful contour Mrs. Adair, of 92, New Bond Street, has invented the Ganesh Chin Strap which, if worn at night, braces up the sagging muscles. It keeps the mouth closed during sleep, prevents snoring, and entirely eradicates a double chin. If children who are in the habit of sleeping with their mouths open are made to wear this strap, it will, by keeping their mouths closed, teach them to breathe properly through their nose. The Ganesh Forehead Strap, which is another clever invention of Mrs. Adair, smooths out the lines on the forehead and prevents crow's feet. It will be found very soothing by sufferers from neuralgia and nervous headaches

We have good reason for anticipating early activity in the West African Mining Market. Prices are likely to go well ahead, and investors or speculators who take an interest in this list will have reason to be satisfied with the course of events.

Sherry's is now patronized by the élite of both Hove and Brighton, more especially at the afternoon dance. They are now giving special balls every other Wednesday from 8 to 2.30 a.m. The Saturday evening dance is still most popular with the week-end visitor.

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(Series IV.—In the Sporting World.)

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MOTORS AND MOTORING

By W. Whittall

THE FUTURE OF TAXATION

According to the daily Press, we are shortly to have our cars taxed on the basis of £1 per horse-power, though we are not told how the taxable power is to be ascertained. My own information is that the tax will not be levied on that basis at all, though the prophecy is sufficiently near the mark to be colourable. What I understand to be in the minds of the Committee, which is inquiring into the subject for the Minister of Transport, is to recommend that the existing classification shall be retained, and a tax imposed compounded of the existing car tax, and a further impost based on an assumed average mileage of 5,000 per annum. That would bring the total payment out at a sum representing very slightly more than we pay now, assuming again that we do not run more than the 5,000 miles a year. Every mile over that is to the good of the motorist, and *per contra* anything less would be against him. Of course, the fuel tax is to go; but I think we may trust the petrol ring to see that our fuel does not cost us any less. Indeed, I believe that before these notes appear in print the price of petrol will have undergone a very substantial rise in price.

To revert to the question of taxation, I think I have argued before that there is no fairer manner of taxing the car than by the fuel tax, because that means we pay for our actual user of the highways. If we use them to the extent of a couple of thousand miles a year, we pay for distance. If, on the other hand, we run twenty thousand miles, we pay accordingly. But there are admittedly other considerations, beyond the question of what is fair or unfair, which have to be taken into account. There is one vital aspect of this fuel tax matter, and that is that on its present basis it is expensive to collect and that it can be easily evaded. That being so, the Treasury has determined that it must go, and that something more workable—and, incidentally, more profitable to the Exchequer—must take its place. I do not think we could have any better substitute than the one which it is understood the Committee will recommend. I do not mean the £1 per horse-power business, to which it is possible to take the very strongest exception, but that which I have noted as being what I understand the Committee to have in mind. So much for that.

TAX ALL ROAD TRAFFIC

Now we come, however, to another and gravely important aspect of the matter. Since 1904 the motor vehicle has been subjected to penal and differential taxation. It has been undergoing the penalty which has to be endured by all things that are new, and has paid vast sums of money to the Government and local authorities the while other forms of traffic have been exempt. The time has gone by for that sort of thing, and we have arrived at a stage in traffic history when anomalies must disappear and everyone must pay his share towards the maintenance of the highways he uses. In other words, if it is admitted as just that wheeled traffic should pay for the road it uses, then it must be all traffic and not a single form of traction. We as motorists agree on the justice of the basic principle, but we do not agree that the burden should rest with crushing weight on one set of shoulders, and the Government must be told, firmly and plainly, that the anomaly which exists must be removed.

ROLLS-ROYCE IN AMERICA

Messrs. Rolls-Royce are carrying the war into the enemy's camp by establishing a factory within 130 miles of New York, where they intend to manufacture cars in limited numbers and which are to be indistinguishable from the product of the works at Derby. There are some good cars made in America, but we can say without fear that there is nothing that approaches the Rolls-Royce in quality or performance.

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FROM THE "GLOBE," 12th NOV. 1919.

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